MARVEL

4

AvsX

THE NEW AVENGERS

BENDIS • DEODATO

AT WAR WITH THE X-MEN!

Captain America has called the New Avengers to war against the X-Men, and Luke Cage will be forced to reconcile a decision that has been hanging over his head for months: Stand with his wife and child? Or suit up alongside the Avengers? Then, Iron Fist discovers the shocking secret history of the Phoenix in K'un-Lun's Book of the Iron Fist! Hope Summers journeys to Iron Fist's magical home to uncover her destiny. But will she conquer her future — or be consumed by it? Plus: The X-Men take three of the Avengers' mightiest captive, but no jail can hold them for long. Or can it? And with the Avengers/X-Men war raging at a fevered pitch, Captain America calls out the big guns against the X-Men and the Phoenix Five: Can the Illuminati succeed where the Avengers failed?

> **"...Bendis manages to build anticipation as the sense of doom grows."**
>
> — Jesse Schedeen, *IGN.com*

T+

Collects *New Avengers* #24-30, written by **Brian Michael Bendis** [*Ultimate Comics Spider-Man*] and illustrated by **Mike Deodato** [*Secret Avengers*].

MARVEL

A VS X

4

THE NEW AVENGERS

BENDIS • DEODATO

MARVEL
24
A VS X

THE NEW AVENGERS

BENDIS
DEODATO
CONRAD
BEREDO

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EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES, UNITED AGAINST A COMMON THREAT! ON THAT DAY THE AVENGERS WERE BORN, TO FIGHT FOES THAT NO SINGLE HERO COULD WITHSTAND!

NEW AVENGERS

WOLVERINE

LUKE CAGE

DR. STRANGE

MS. MARVEL

MOCKINGBIRD

THING

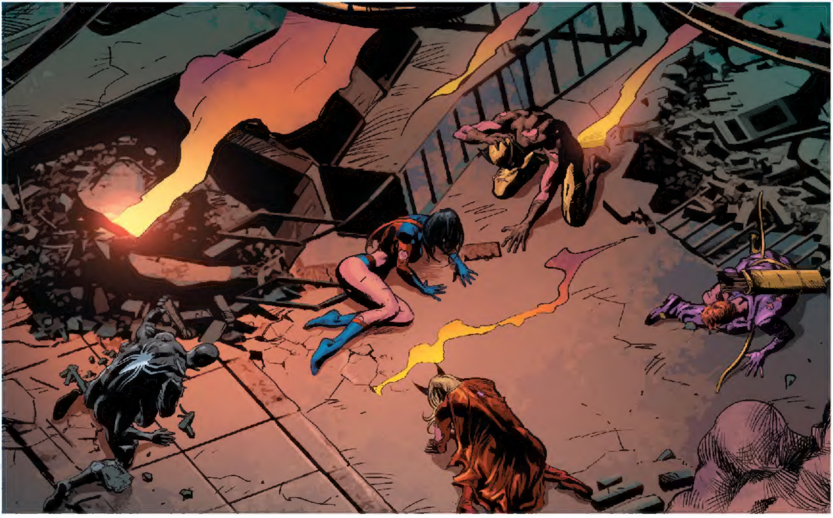
JESSICA JONES

IRON FIST

VICTORIA HAND

SPIDER-MAN

DAREDEVIL



AVENGERS COMMANDER STEVE ROGERS HAS GIVEN LUKE CAGE, JESSICA JONES, MS. MARVEL, MOCKINGBIRD, DAREDEVIL, SPIDER-MAN, DR. STRANGE, WOLVERINE, IRON FIST AND THE THING THE KEYS TO AVENGERS MANSION, A LIAISON IN THE CONTROVERSIAL FORM OF VICTORIA HAND, AND FREE REIN TO PROTECT THE WORLD ANY WAY THEY SEE FIT.

NORMAN OSBORN ESCAPED FROM PRISON AND THREATENED JESSICA JONES' BABY. JESSICA TOOK THE BABY AND LEFT THE TEAM.

THE WORLD-DESTROYING PHOENIX FORCE IS HEADING FOR EARTH. THE AVENGERS BELIEVE IT WILL DESTROY ALL LIFE ON THE PLANET, THE X-MEN BELIEVE IT WILL SAVE THE MUTANT RACE FROM EXTINCTION, AND EVERYONE BELIEVES THAT IT IS COMING FOR HOPE, A YOUNG GIRL THOUGHT TO BE THE MUTANT MESSIAH. THE AVENGERS HAVE GONE TO THE MUTANT SANCTUARY OF UTOPIA TO TAKE HOPE INTO CUSTODY, BUT THE X-MEN'S LEADER CYCLOPS HAS NO INTENTION OF LETTING HER GO QUIETLY.

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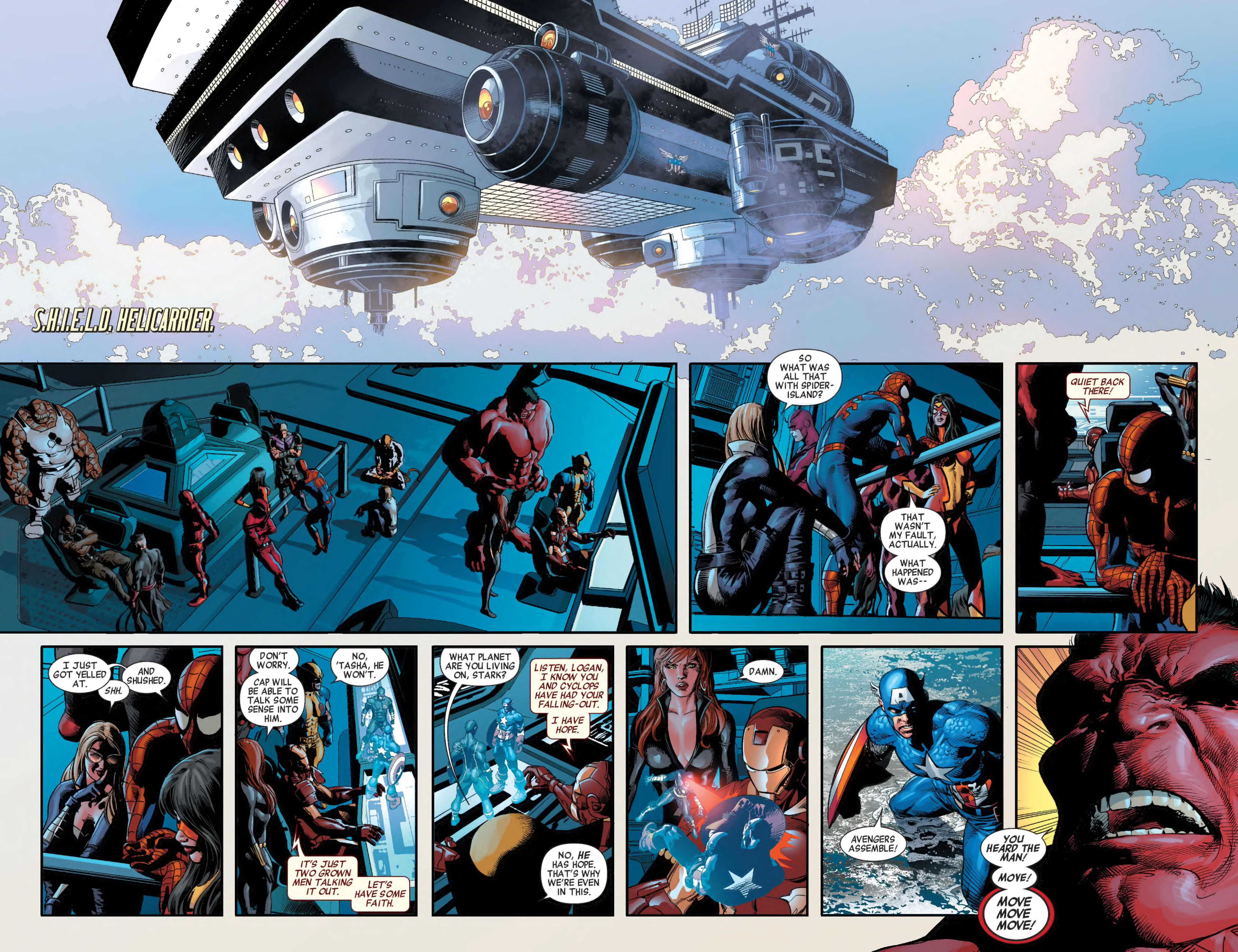
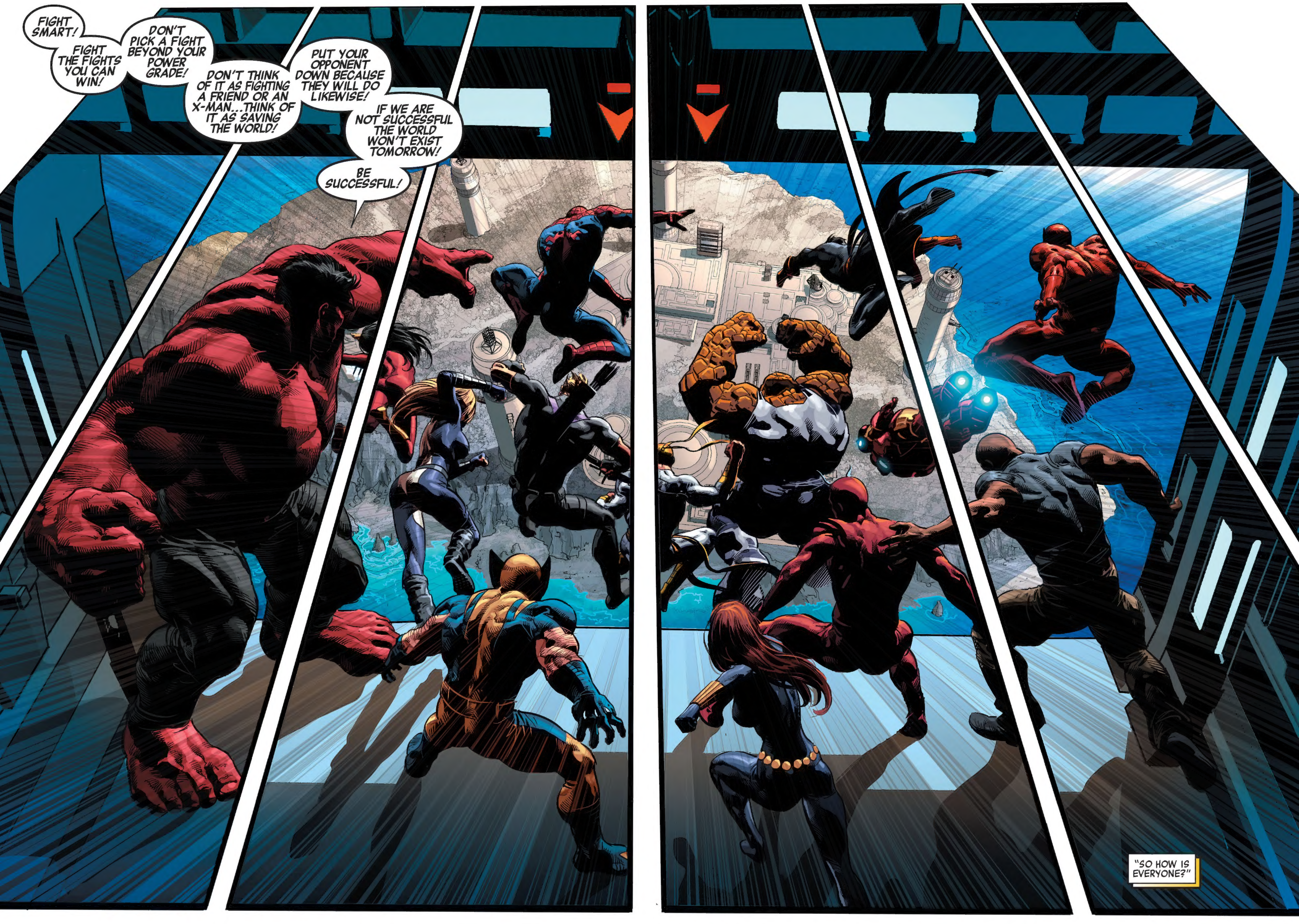
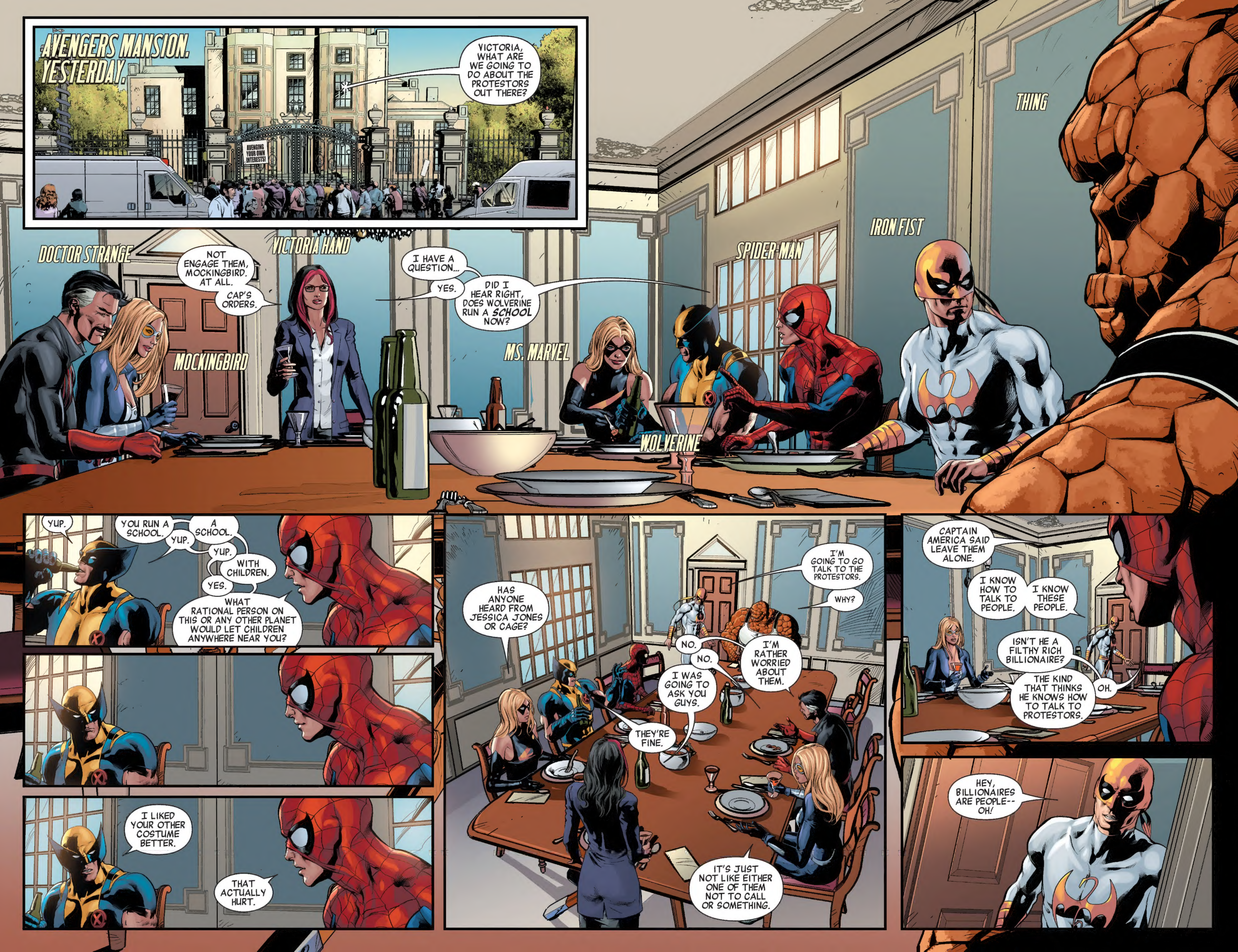
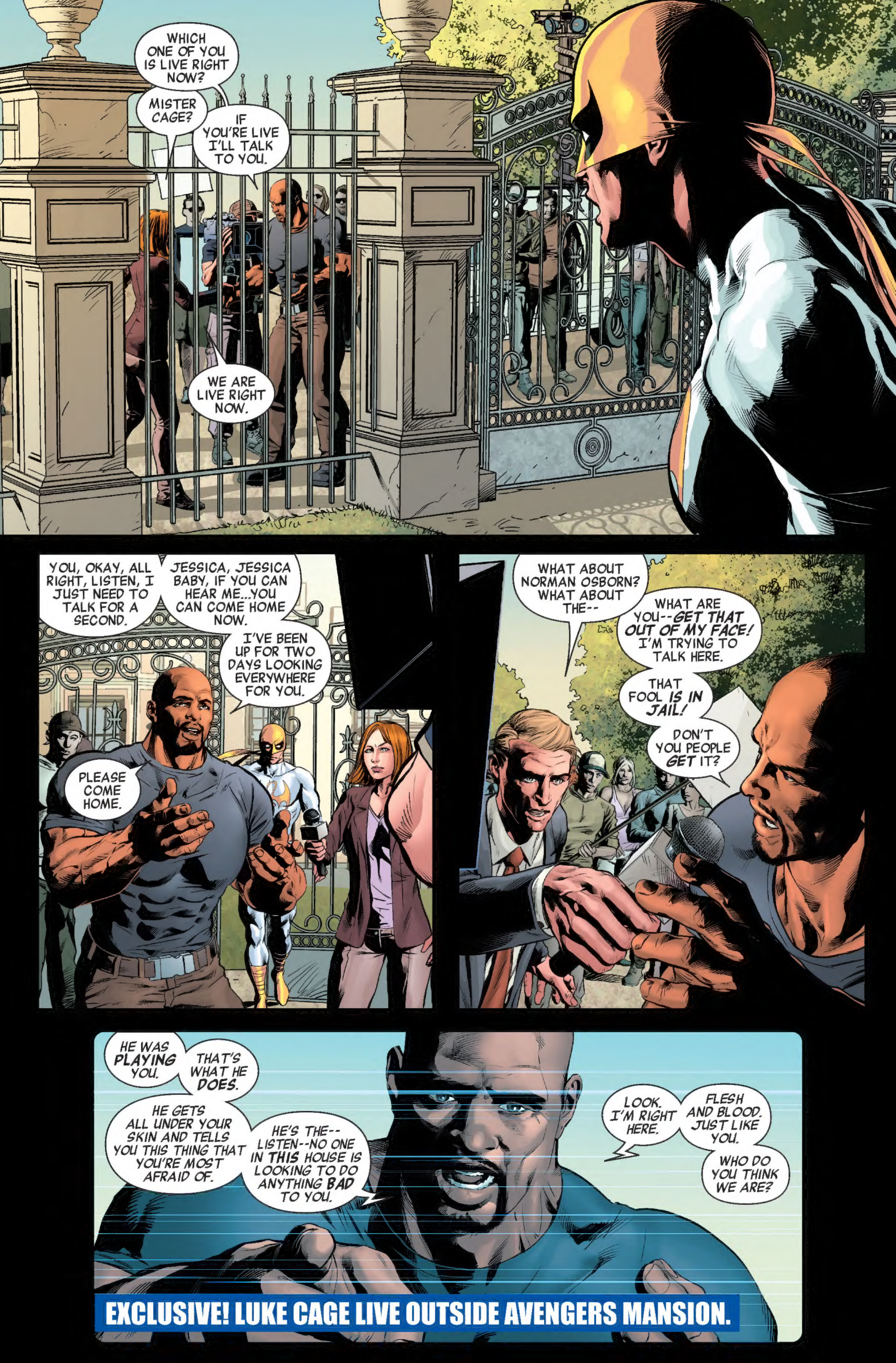
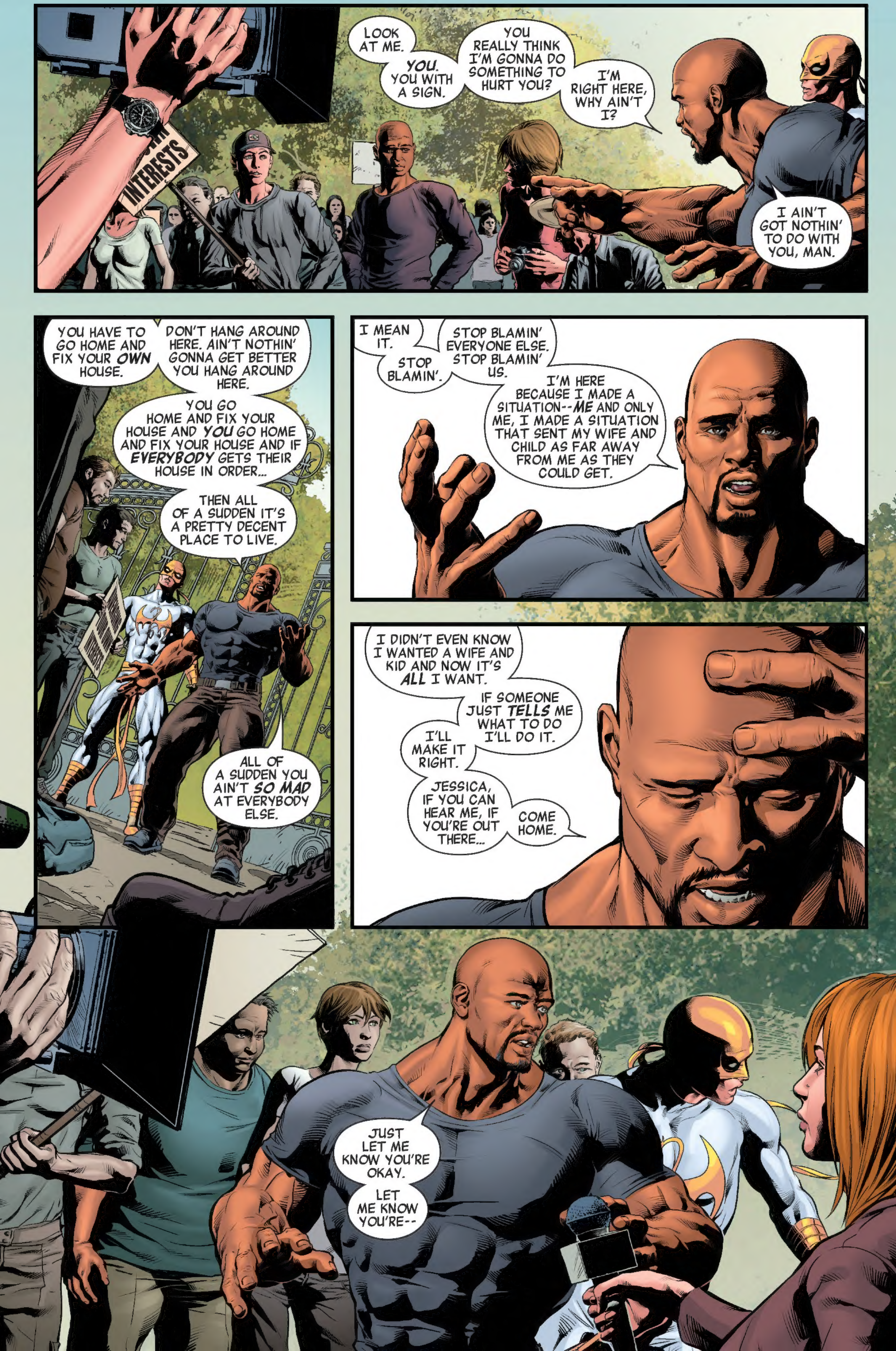
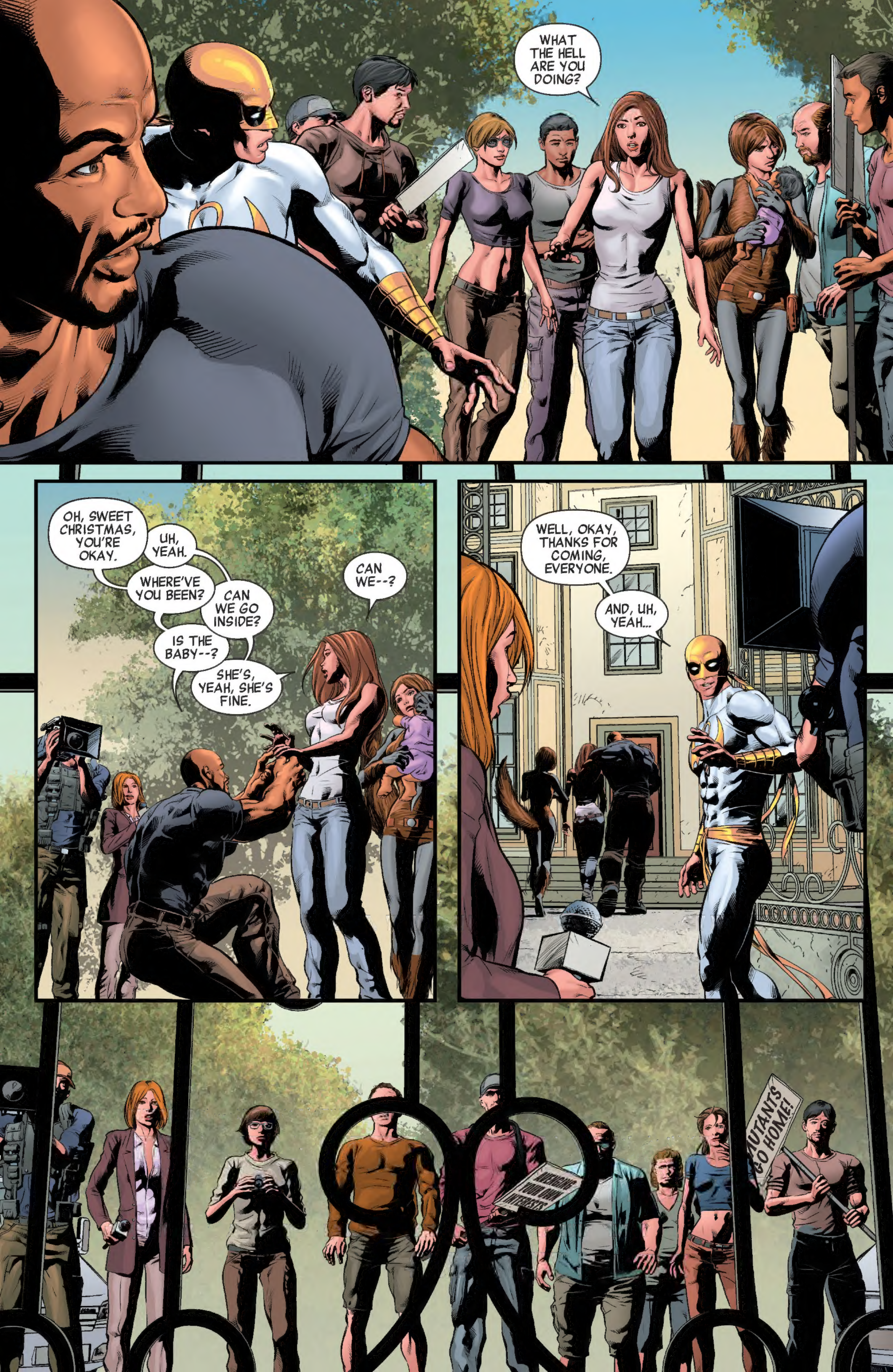

S.H.I.E.L.D. HELICARRIER.
SO WHAT WAS ALL THAT WITH SPIDER-ISLAND?
THAT WASN'T MY FAULT, ACTUALLY.
WHAT HAPPENED WAS--
QUIET BACK THERE!
I JUST GOT YELLED AT.
SHH.
AND SHUSHED.
DON'T WORRY.
CAP WILL BE ABLE TO TALK SOME SENSE INTO HIM.
NO, 'TASHA, HE WON'T.
IT'S JUST TWO GROWN MEN TALKING IT OUT.
LET'S HAVE SOME FAITH.
WHAT PLANET ARE YOU LIVING ON, STARK?
LISTEN, LOGAN, I KNOW YOU AND CYCLOPS HAVE HAD YOUR FALLING-OUT.
I HAVE HOPE.
NO, HE HAS HOPE. THAT'S WHY WE'RE EVEN IN THIS.
DAMN.
AVENGERS ASSEMBLE!
YOU HEARD THE MAN!
MOVE!
MOVE MOVE MOVE!

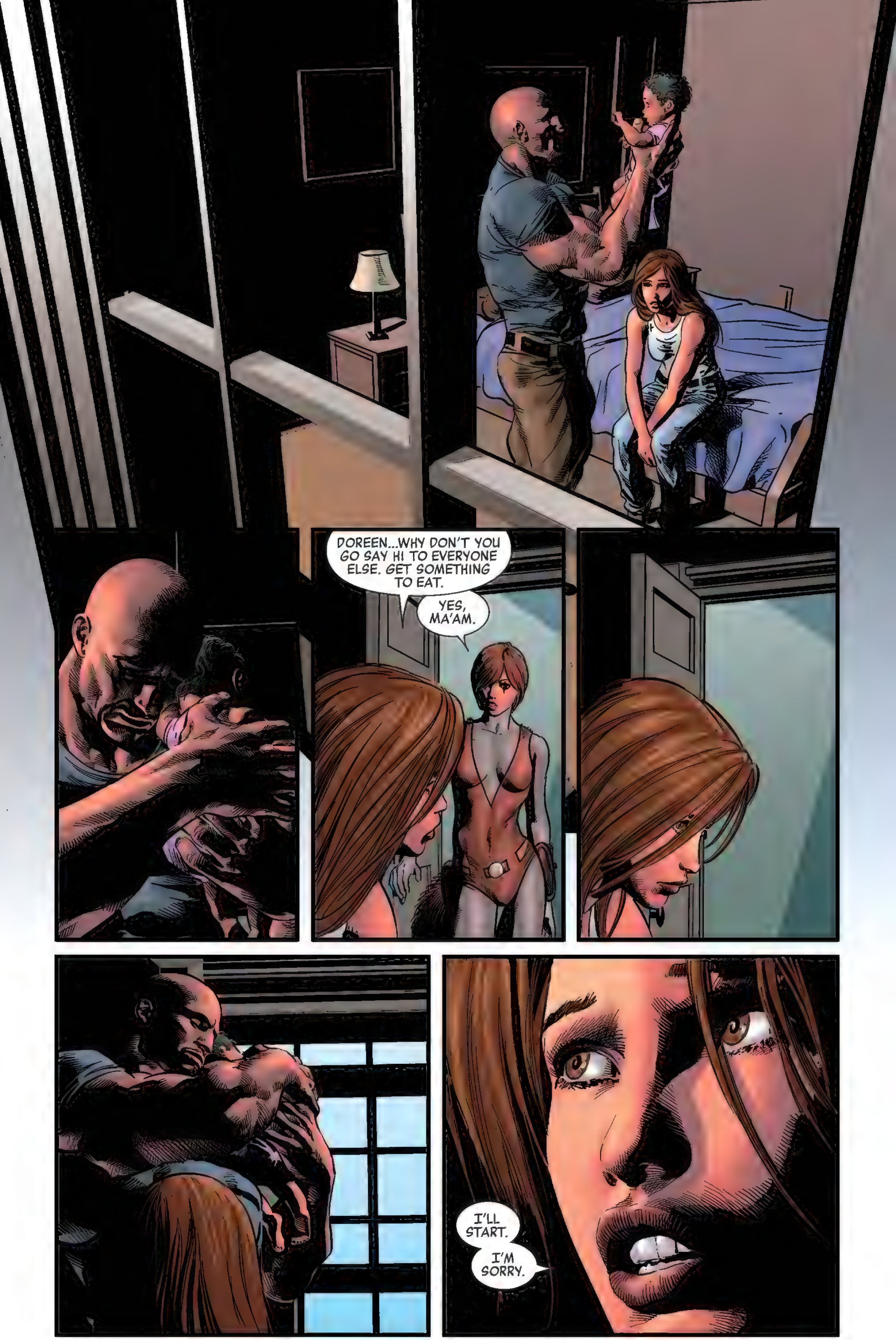

FIGHT SMART!
FIGHT THE FIGHTS YOU CAN WIN!
DON'T PICK A FIGHT BEYOND YOUR POWER GRADE!
DON'T THINK OF IT AS FIGHTING A FRIEND OR AN X-MAN...THINK OF IT AS SAVING THE WORLD!
PUT YOUR OPPONENT DOWN BECAUSE THEY WILL DO LIKEWISE!
IF WE ARE NOT SUCCESSFUL THE WORLD WON'T EXIST TOMORROW!
BE SUCCESSFUL!
"SO HOW IS EVERYONE?"

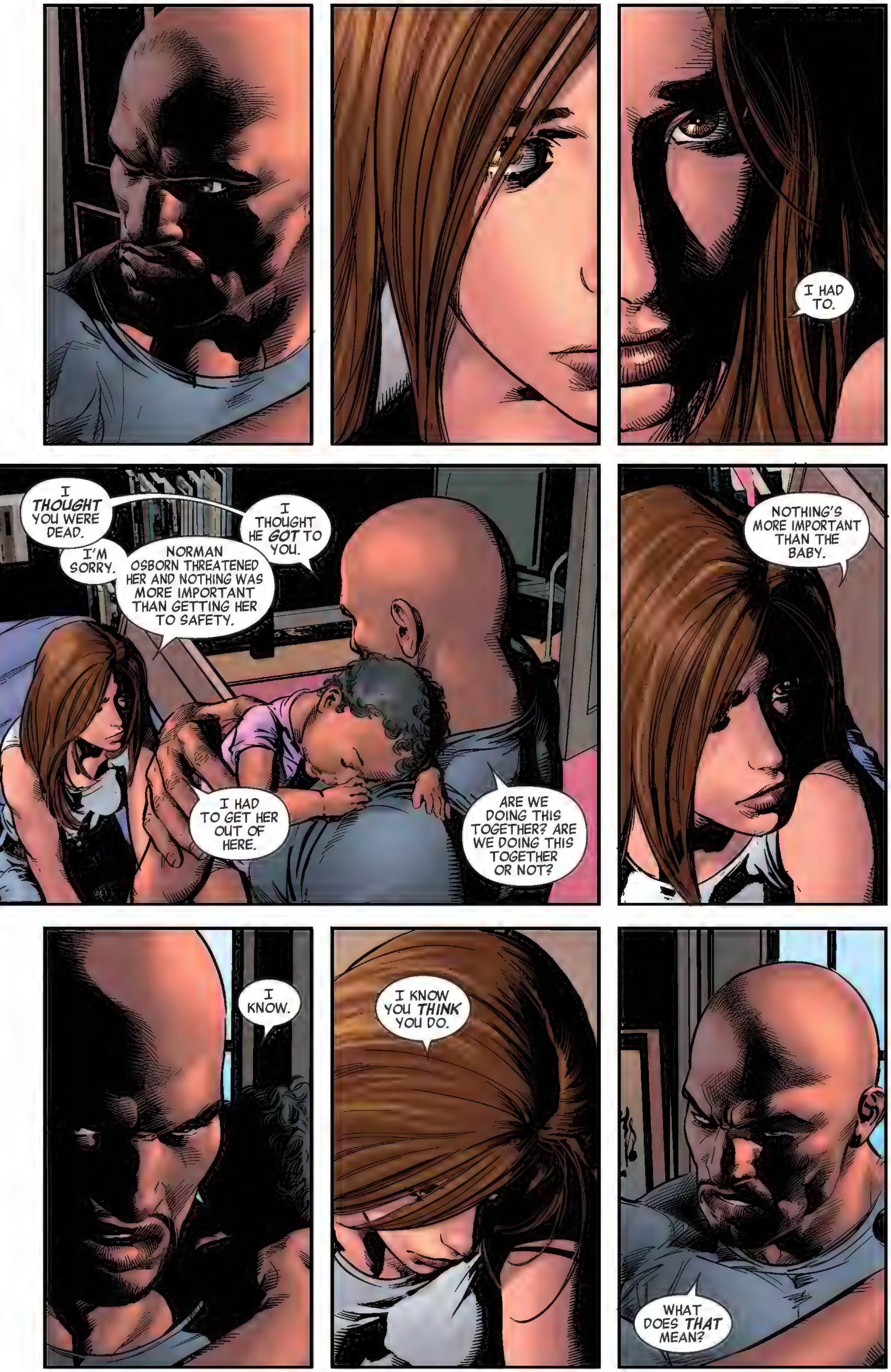

AVENGERS MANSION. YESTERDAY.
VICTORIA, WHAT ARE WE GOING TO DO ABOUT THE PROTESTORS OUT THERE?
AVENGING YOUR OWN INTERESTS!
DOCTOR STRANGE
MOCKINGBIRD
VICTORIA HAND
MS. MARVEL
WOLVERINE
SPIDER-MAN
IRON FIST
THING
NOT ENGAGE THEM, MOCKINGBIRD. AT ALL.
CAP'S ORDERS.
I HAVE A QUESTION...
YES.
DID I HEAR RIGHT, DOES WOLVERINE RUN A *SCHOOL* NOW?
YUP.
YOU RUN A SCHOOL.
YUP.
A SCHOOL.
YUP.
WITH CHILDREN.
YES.
WHAT RATIONAL PERSON ON THIS OR ANY OTHER PLANET WOULD LET CHILDREN ANYWHERE NEAR YOU?
I LIKED YOUR OTHER COSTUME BETTER.
THAT ACTUALLY HURT.
HAS ANYONE HEARD FROM JESSICA JONES OR CAGE?
NO.
NO.
I'M RATHER WORRIED ABOUT THEM.
I WAS GOING TO ASK YOU GUYS.
THEY'RE FINE.
IT'S JUST NOT LIKE EITHER ONE OF THEM NOT TO CALL OR SOMETHING.
I'M GOING TO GO TALK TO THE PROTESTORS.
WHY?
CAPTAIN AMERICA SAID LEAVE THEM ALONE.
I KNOW HOW TO TALK TO PEOPLE.
I KNOW THESE PEOPLE.
ISN'T HE A FILTHY RICH BILLIONAIRE?
THE KIND THAT THINKS HE KNOWS HOW TO TALK TO PROTESTORS.
OH.
HEY, BILLIONAIRES ARE PEOPLE-- OH!

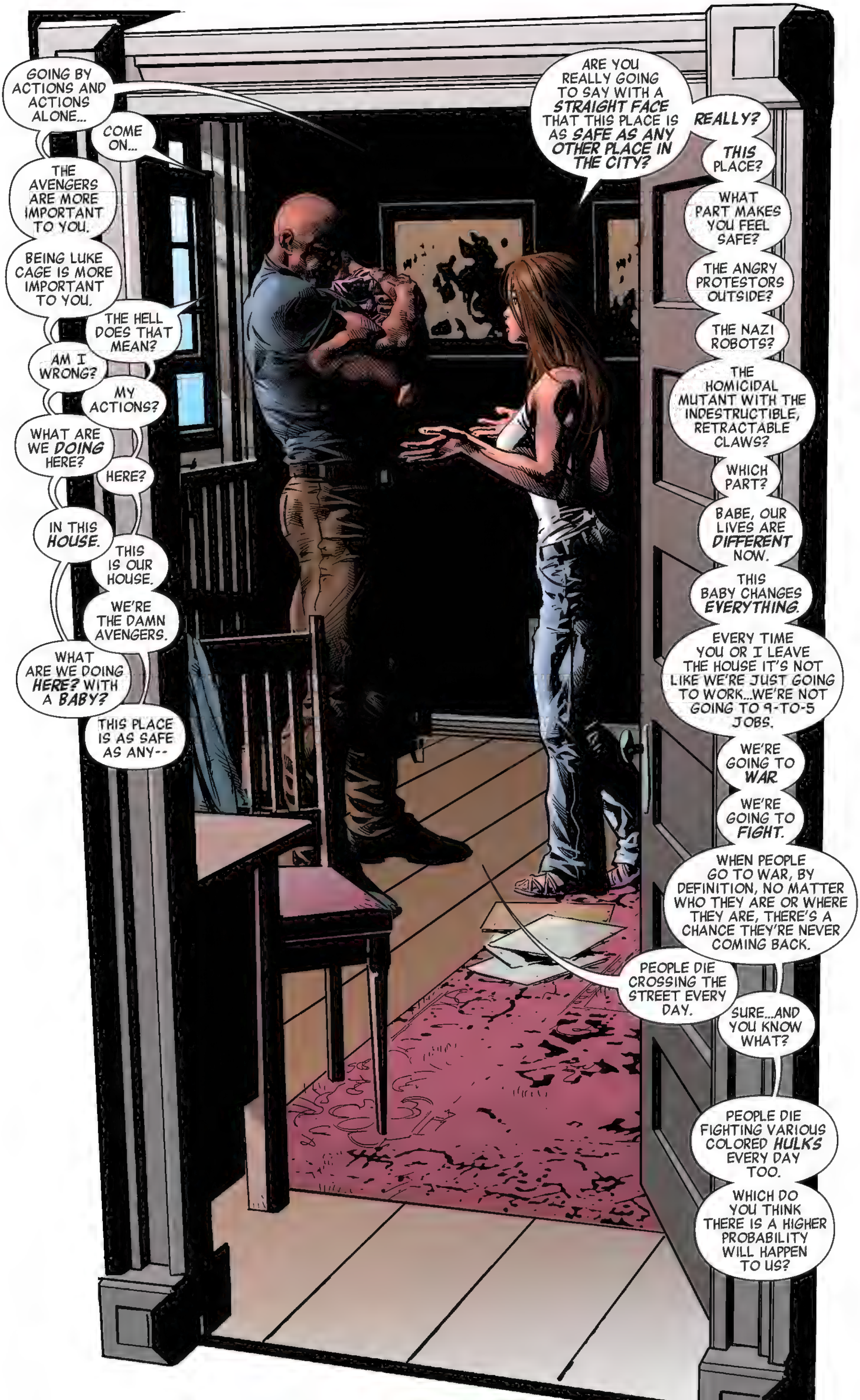

WHICH ONE OF YOU IS LIVE RIGHT NOW?
MISTER CAGE?
IF YOU'RE LIVE I'LL TALK TO YOU.
WE ARE LIVE RIGHT NOW.
YOU, OKAY, ALL RIGHT, LISTEN, I JUST NEED TO TALK FOR A SECOND.
JESSICA, JESSICA BABY, IF YOU CAN HEAR ME...YOU CAN COME HOME NOW.
I'VE BEEN UP FOR TWO DAYS LOOKING EVERYWHERE FOR YOU.
PLEASE COME HOME.
WHAT ABOUT NORMAN OSBORN? WHAT ABOUT THE--
WHAT ARE YOU--*GET THAT OUT OF MY FACE!* I'M TRYING TO TALK HERE.
THAT FOOL *IS IN JAIL!*
DON'T YOU PEOPLE *GET* IT?
HE WAS *PLAYING* YOU.
THAT'S WHAT HE *DOES.*
HE GETS ALL UNDER YOUR SKIN AND TELLS YOU THIS THING THAT YOU'RE MOST AFRAID OF.
HE'S THE-- LISTEN--NO ONE IN *THIS* HOUSE IS LOOKING TO DO ANYTHING *BAD* TO YOU.
LOOK. I'M RIGHT HERE.
FLESH AND BLOOD. JUST LIKE YOU.
WHO DO YOU THINK WE ARE?
EXCLUSIVE! LUKE CAGE LIVE OUTSIDE AVENGERS MANSION.

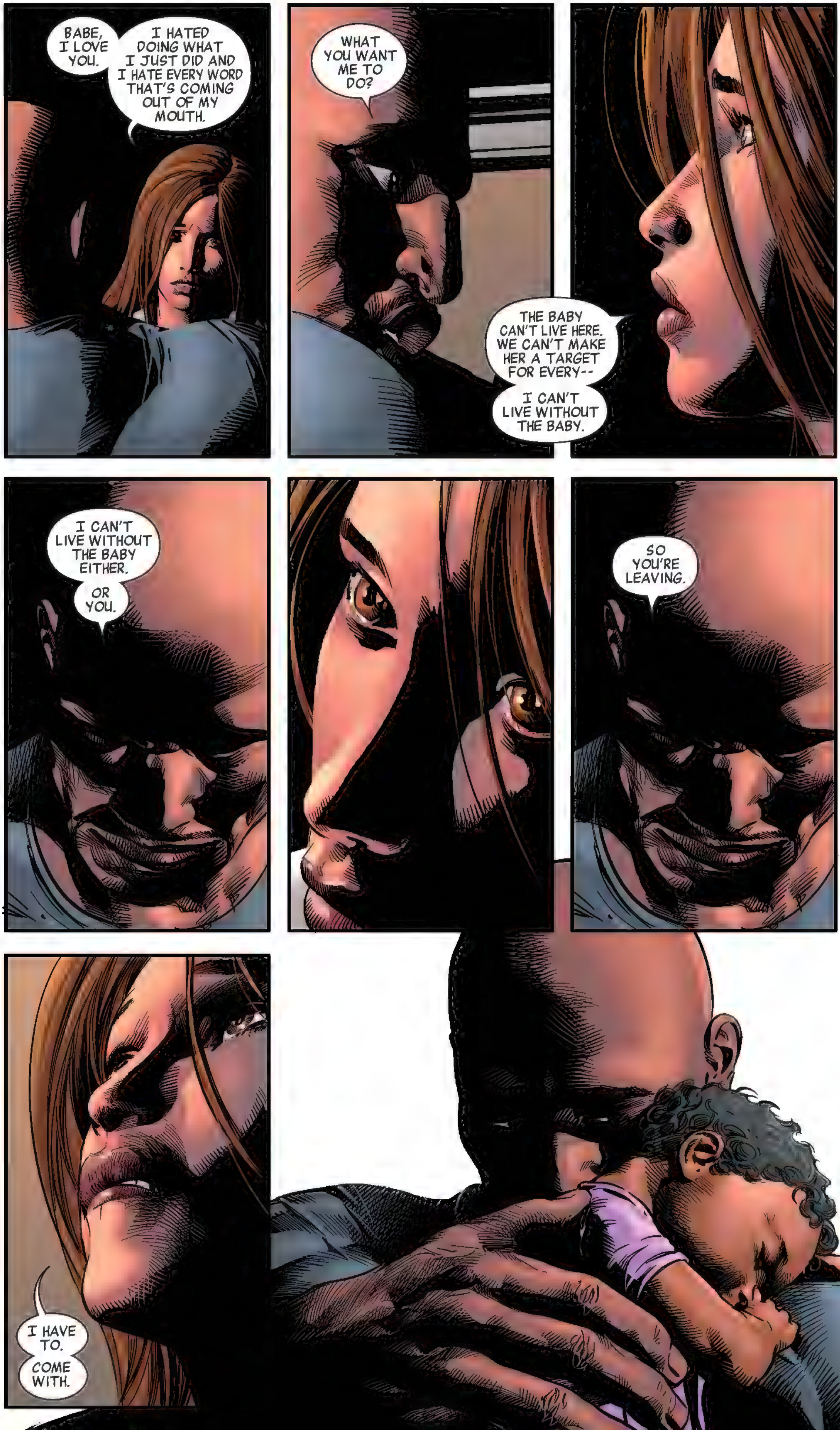

INTERESTS
LOOK AT ME.
YOU. YOU WITH A SIGN.
YOU REALLY THINK I'M GONNA DO SOMETHING TO HURT YOU?
I'M RIGHT HERE, WHY AIN'T I?
I AIN'T GOT NOTHIN' TO DO WITH YOU, MAN.
YOU HAVE TO GO HOME AND FIX YOUR *OWN* HOUSE.
DON'T HANG AROUND HERE. AIN'T NOTHIN' GONNA GET BETTER YOU HANG AROUND HERE.
YOU GO HOME AND FIX YOUR HOUSE AND *YOU* GO HOME AND FIX YOUR HOUSE AND IF *EVERYBODY* GETS THEIR HOUSE IN ORDER...
THEN ALL OF A SUDDEN IT'S A PRETTY DECENT PLACE TO LIVE.
ALL OF A SUDDEN YOU AIN'T *SO MAD* AT EVERYBODY ELSE.
I MEAN IT.
STOP BLAMIN'.
STOP BLAMIN' EVERYONE ELSE. STOP BLAMIN' US.
I'M HERE BECAUSE I MADE A SITUATION--*ME* AND ONLY ME, I MADE A SITUATION THAT SENT MY WIFE AND CHILD AS FAR AWAY FROM ME AS THEY COULD GET.
I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW I WANTED A WIFE AND KID AND NOW IT'S *ALL* I WANT.
IF SOMEONE JUST *TELLS* ME WHAT TO DO I'LL DO IT.
I'LL MAKE IT RIGHT.
JESSICA, IF YOU CAN HEAR ME, IF YOU'RE OUT THERE...
COME HOME.
JUST LET ME KNOW YOU'RE OKAY.
LET ME KNOW YOU'RE--

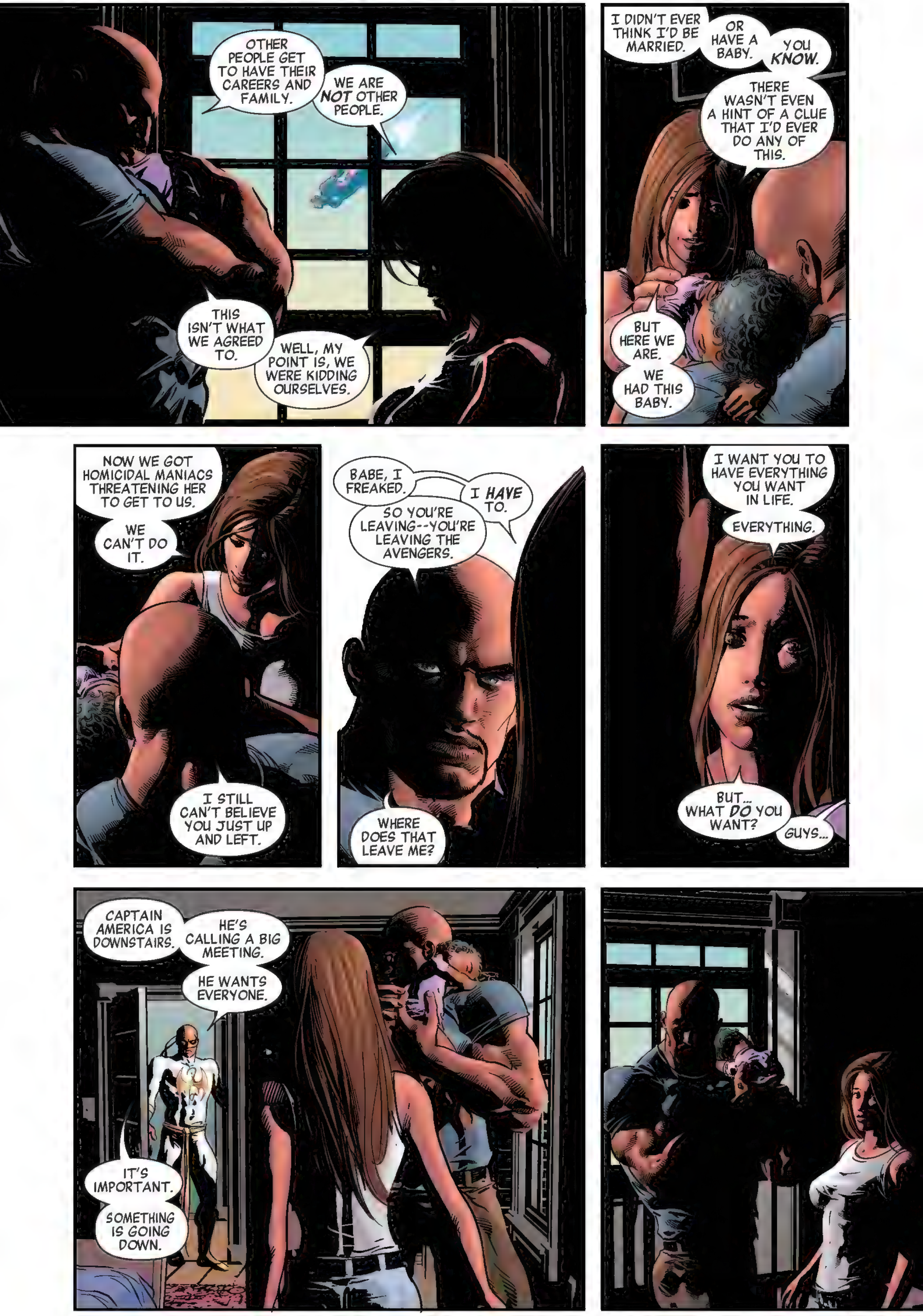

WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING?
OH, SWEET CHRISTMAS, YOU'RE OKAY.
UH, YEAH.
WHERE'VE YOU BEEN?
CAN WE GO INSIDE?
IS THE BABY--?
SHE'S, YEAH, SHE'S FINE.
CAN WE--?
WELL, OKAY, THANKS FOR COMING, EVERYONE.
AND, UH, YEAH...
MUTANTS GO HOME!

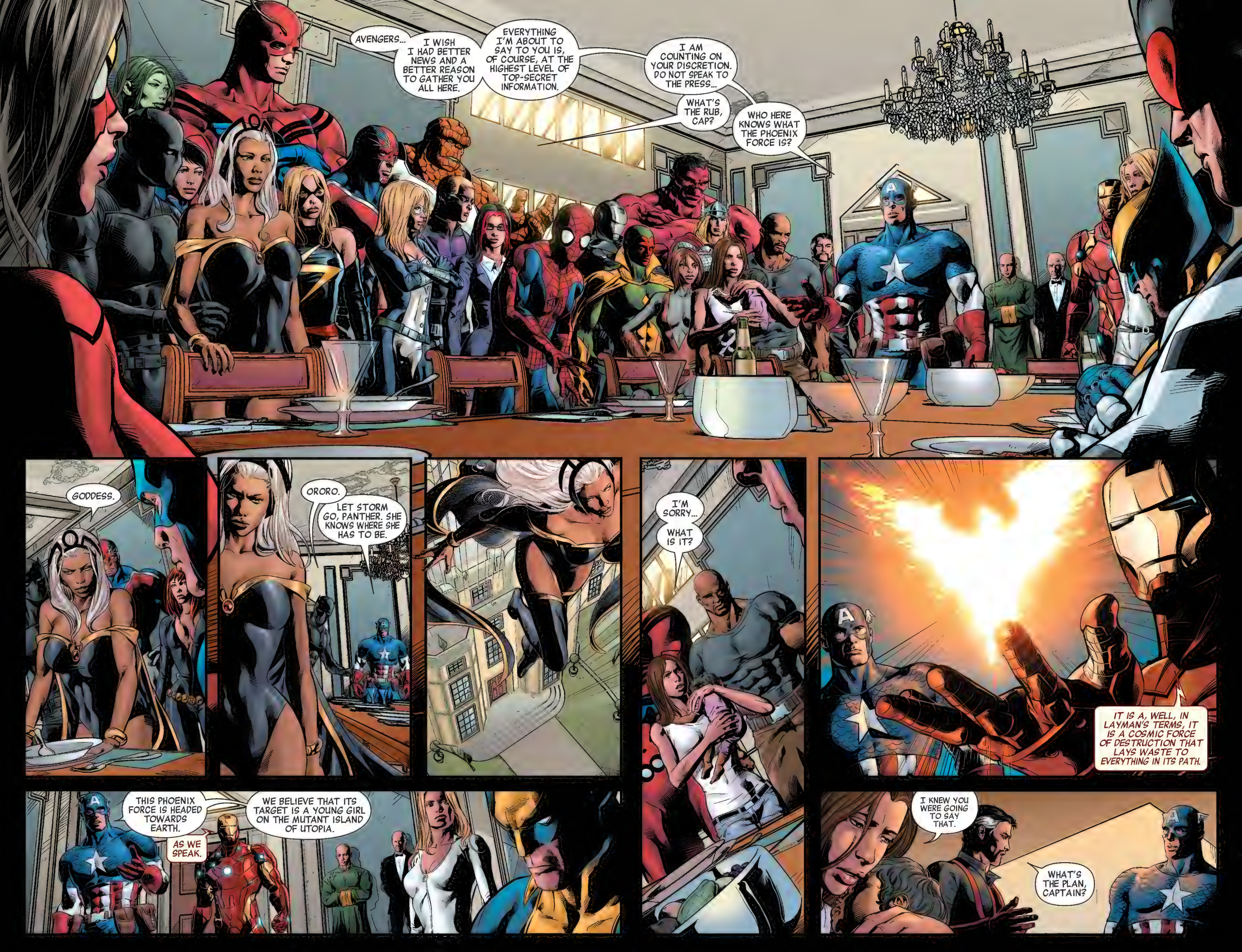

DOREEN...WHY DON'T YOU GO SAY HI TO EVERYONE ELSE. GET SOMETHING TO EAT.
YES, MA'AM.
I'LL START.
I'M SORRY.

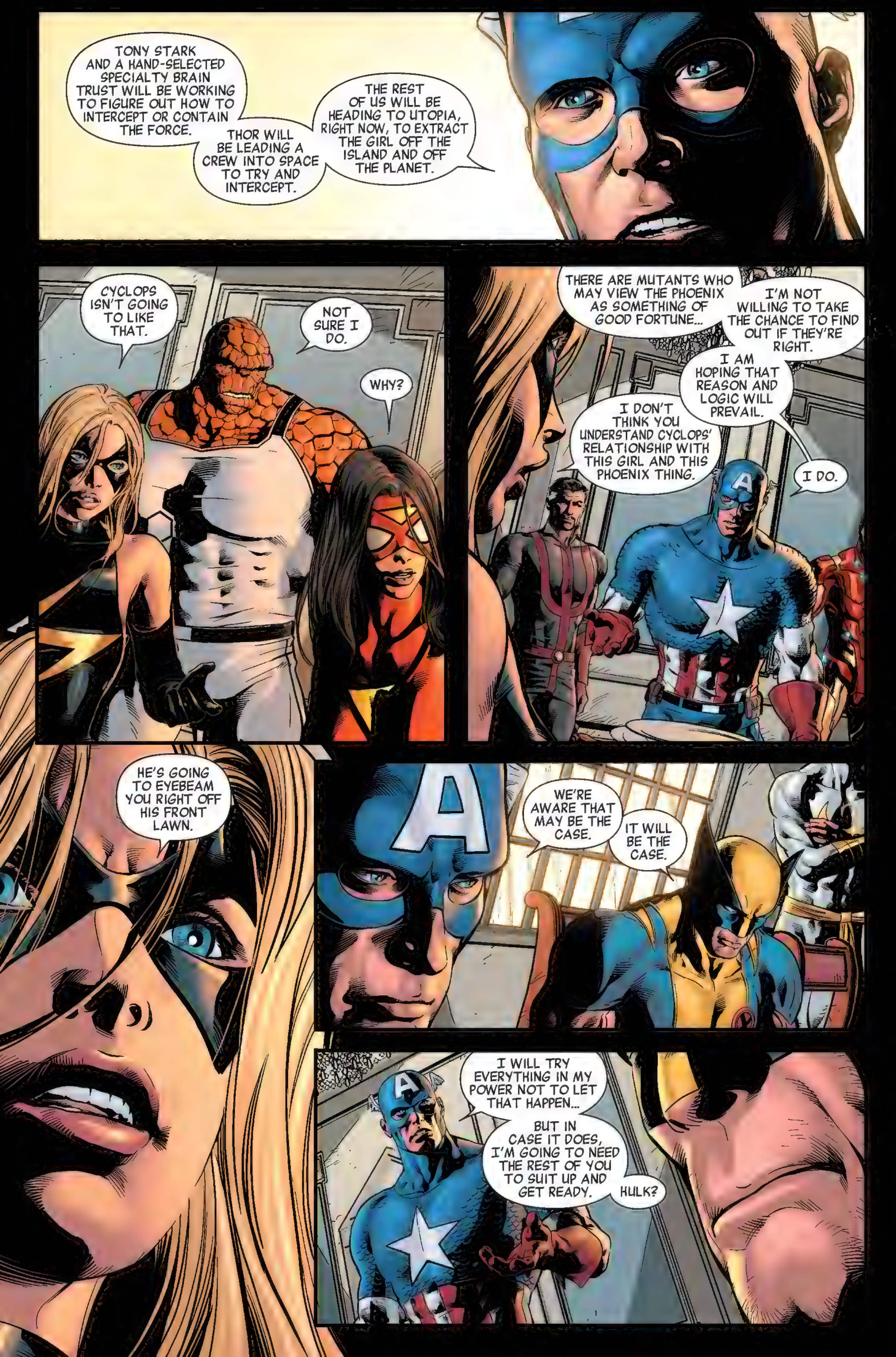

I HAD TO.
I *THOUGHT* YOU WERE DEAD.
I THOUGHT HE *GOT* TO YOU.
I'M SORRY.
NORMAN OSBORN THREATENED HER AND NOTHING WAS MORE IMPORTANT THAN GETTING HER TO SAFETY.
I HAD TO GET HER OUT OF HERE.
ARE WE DOING THIS TOGETHER? ARE WE DOING THIS TOGETHER OR NOT?
NOTHING'S MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE BABY.
I KNOW.
I KNOW YOU *THINK* YOU DO.
WHAT DOES *THAT* MEAN?

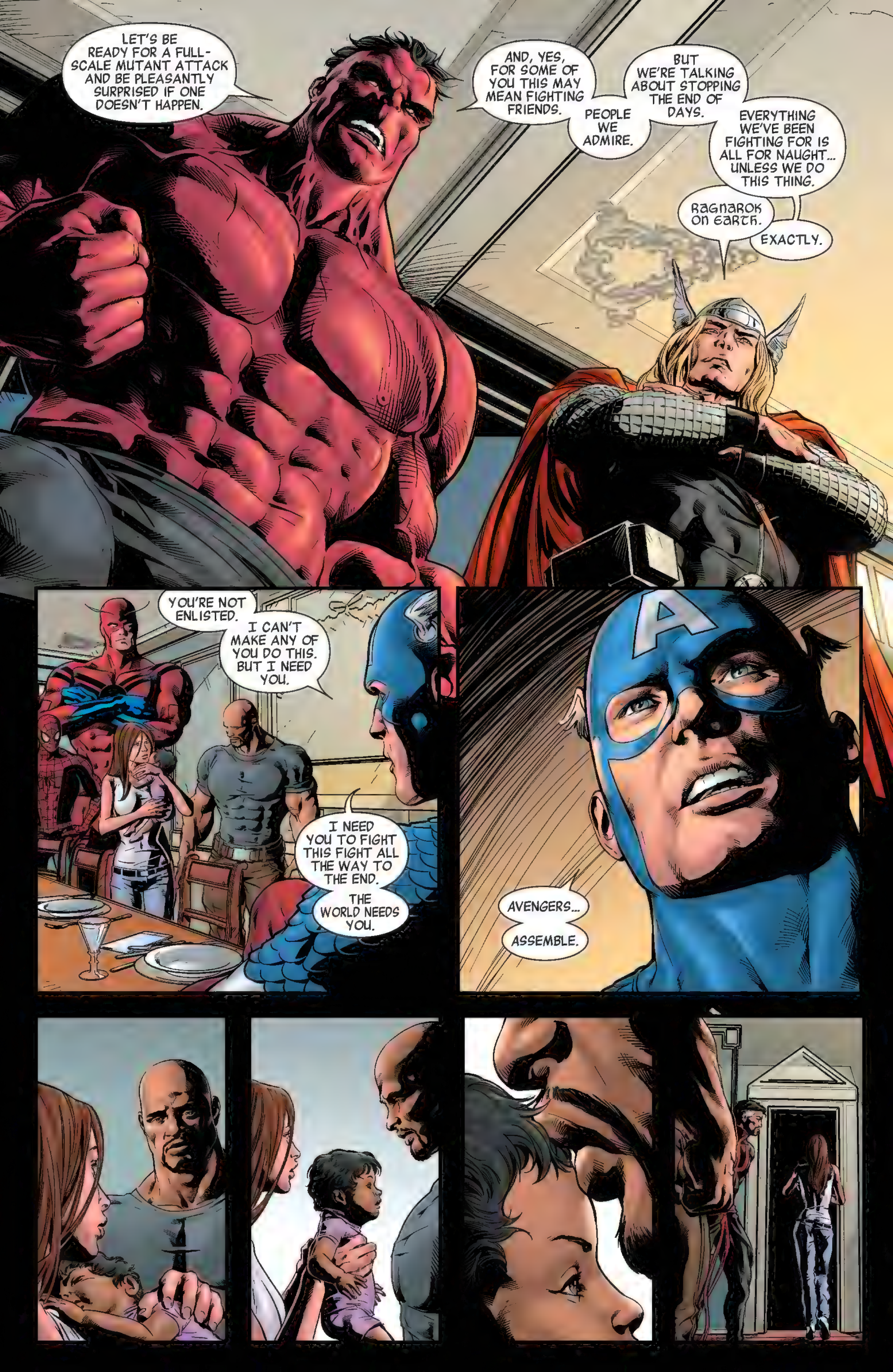

GOING BY ACTIONS AND ACTIONS ALONE...
COME ON...
THE AVENGERS ARE MORE IMPORTANT TO YOU.
BEING LUKE CAGE IS MORE IMPORTANT TO YOU.
THE HELL DOES THAT MEAN?
AM I WRONG?
MY ACTIONS?
WHAT ARE WE *DOING* HERE?
HERE?
IN THIS *HOUSE*.
THIS IS OUR HOUSE.
WE'RE THE DAMN AVENGERS.
WHAT ARE WE DOING *HERE?* WITH A *BABY?*
THIS PLACE IS AS SAFE AS ANY--
ARE YOU REALLY GOING TO SAY WITH A *STRAIGHT FACE* THAT THIS PLACE IS AS *SAFE AS ANY OTHER PLACE IN THE CITY?*
REALLY?
THIS PLACE?
WHAT PART MAKES YOU FEEL SAFE?
THE ANGRY PROTESTORS OUTSIDE?
THE NAZI ROBOTS?
THE HOMICIDAL MUTANT WITH THE INDESTRUCTIBLE, RETRACTABLE CLAWS?
WHICH PART?
BABE, OUR LIVES ARE *DIFFERENT* NOW.
THIS BABY CHANGES *EVERYTHING*.
EVERY TIME YOU OR I LEAVE THE HOUSE IT'S NOT LIKE WE'RE JUST GOING TO WORK...WE'RE NOT GOING TO 9-TO-5 JOBS.
WE'RE GOING TO *WAR*.
WE'RE GOING TO *FIGHT*.
WHEN PEOPLE GO TO WAR, BY DEFINITION, NO MATTER WHO THEY ARE OR WHERE THEY ARE, THERE'S A CHANCE THEY'RE NEVER COMING BACK.
PEOPLE DIE CROSSING THE STREET EVERY DAY.
SURE...AND YOU KNOW WHAT?
PEOPLE DIE FIGHTING VARIOUS COLORED *HULKS* EVERY DAY TOO.
WHICH DO YOU THINK THERE IS A HIGHER PROBABILITY WILL HAPPEN TO US?

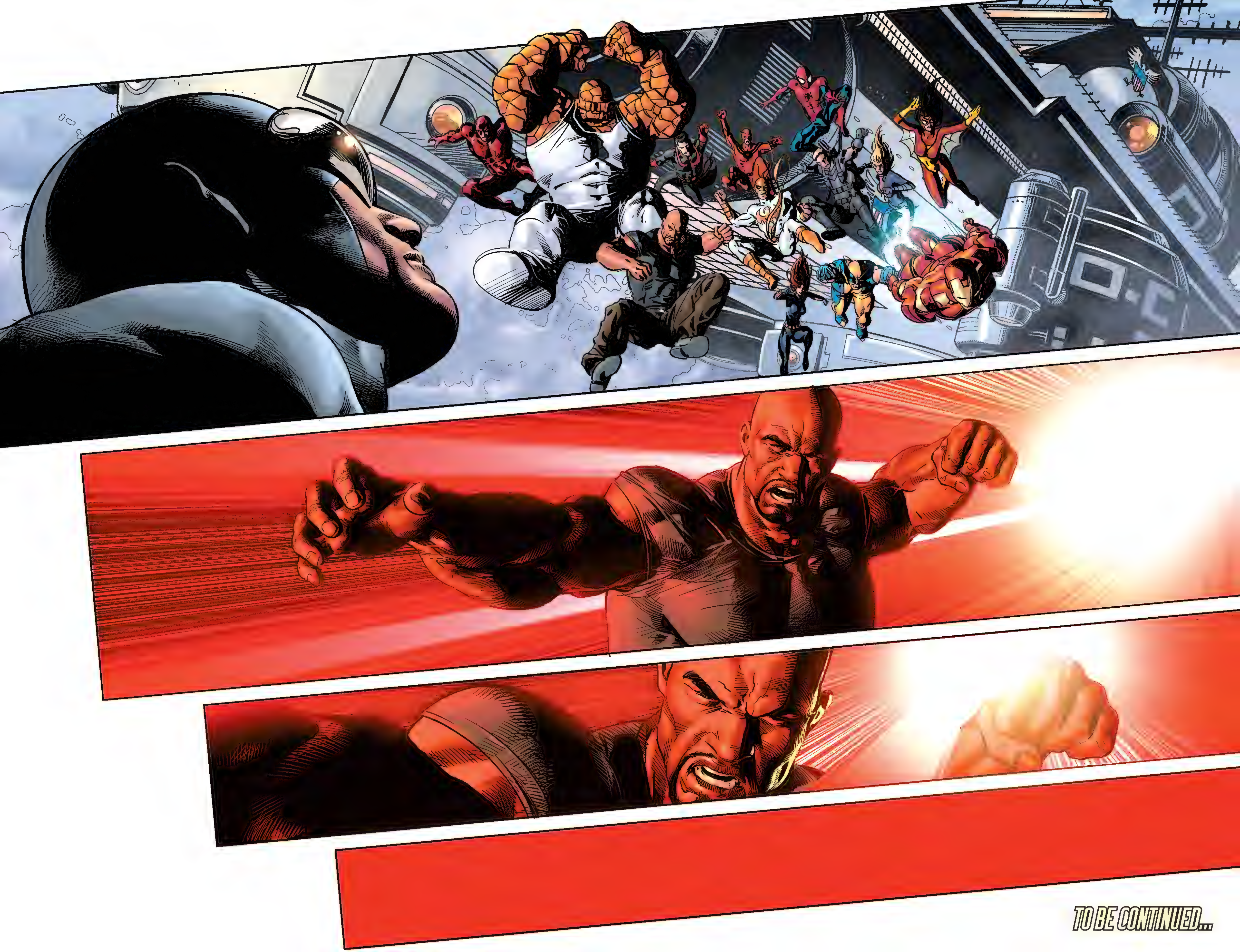

BABE, I LOVE YOU.
I HATED DOING WHAT I JUST DID AND I HATE EVERY WORD THAT'S COMING OUT OF MY MOUTH.
WHAT YOU WANT ME TO DO?
THE BABY CAN'T LIVE HERE. WE CAN'T MAKE HER A TARGET FOR EVERY--
I CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT THE BABY.
I CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT THE BABY EITHER.
OR YOU.
SO YOU'RE LEAVING.
I HAVE TO.
COME WITH.

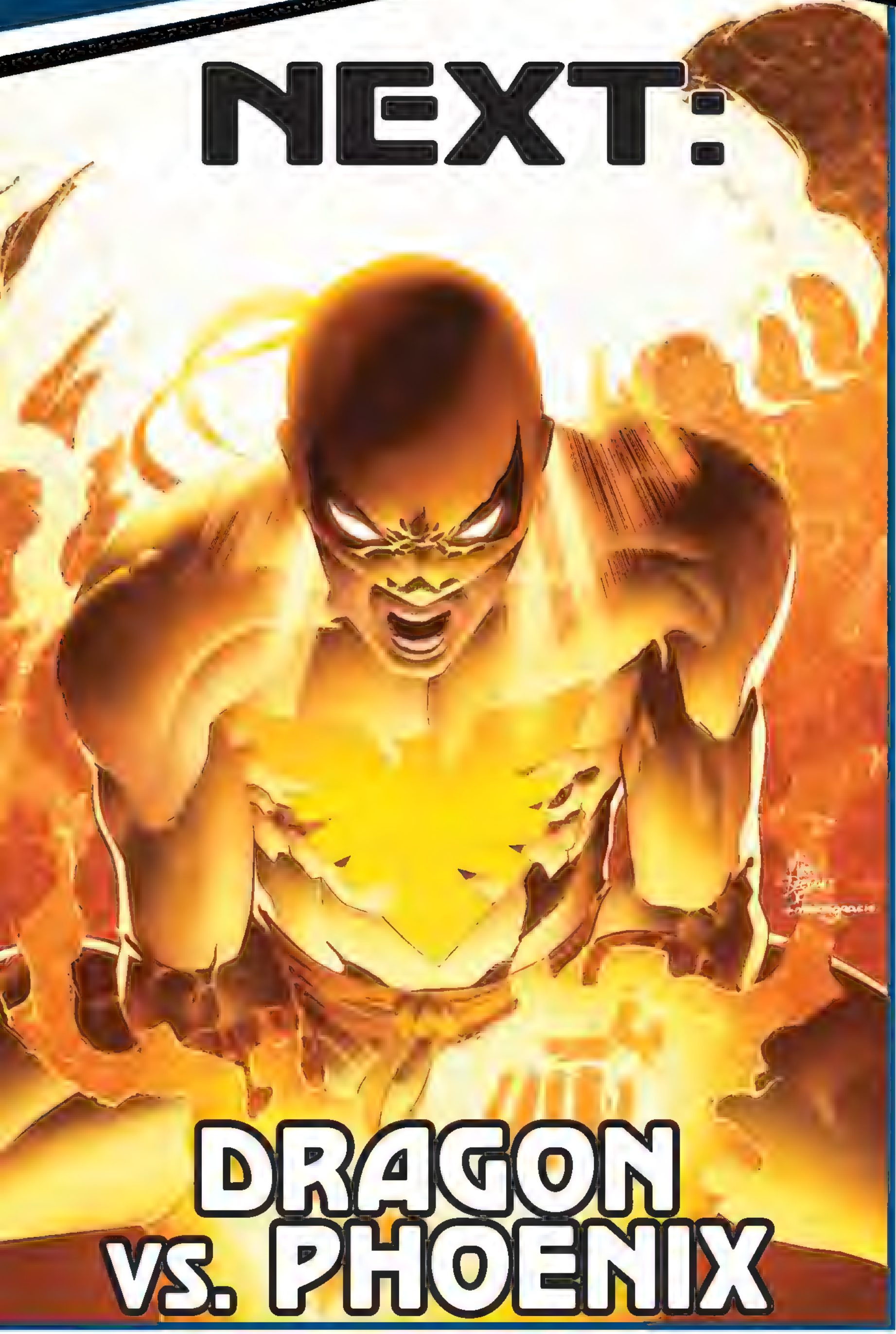

OTHER PEOPLE GET TO HAVE THEIR CAREERS AND FAMILY.
WE ARE *NOT* OTHER PEOPLE.
THIS ISN'T WHAT WE AGREED TO.
WELL, MY POINT IS, WE WERE KIDDING OURSELVES.
I DIDN'T EVER THINK I'D BE MARRIED.
OR HAVE A BABY.
YOU *KNOW*.
THERE WASN'T EVEN A HINT OF A CLUE THAT I'D EVER DO ANY OF THIS.
BUT HERE WE ARE.
WE HAD THIS BABY.
NOW WE GOT HOMICIDAL MANIACS THREATENING HER TO GET TO US.
WE CAN'T DO IT.
I STILL CAN'T BELIEVE YOU JUST UP AND LEFT.
BABE, I FREAKED.
I *HAVE* TO.
SO YOU'RE LEAVING--YOU'RE LEAVING THE AVENGERS.
WHERE DOES THAT LEAVE ME?
I WANT YOU TO HAVE EVERYTHING YOU WANT IN LIFE.
EVERYTHING.
BUT... WHAT *DO* YOU WANT?
GUYS...
CAPTAIN AMERICA IS DOWNSTAIRS.
HE'S CALLING A BIG MEETING.
HE WANTS EVERYONE.
IT'S IMPORTANT.
SOMETHING IS GOING DOWN.


AVENGERS...
I WISH I HAD BETTER NEWS AND A BETTER REASON TO GATHER YOU ALL HERE.
EVERYTHING I'M ABOUT TO SAY TO YOU IS, OF COURSE, AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF TOP-SECRET INFORMATION.
I AM COUNTING ON YOUR DISCRETION. DO NOT SPEAK TO THE PRESS...
WHAT'S THE RUB, CAP?
WHO HERE KNOWS WHAT THE PHOENIX FORCE IS?
GODDESS.
ORORO.
LET STORM GO, PANTHER. SHE KNOWS WHERE SHE HAS TO BE.
I'M SORRY...
WHAT IS IT?
IT IS A, WELL, IN LAYMAN'S TERMS, IT IS A COSMIC FORCE OF DESTRUCTION THAT LAYS WASTE TO EVERYTHING IN ITS PATH.
THIS PHOENIX FORCE IS HEADED TOWARDS EARTH.
AS WE SPEAK.
WE BELIEVE THAT ITS TARGET IS A YOUNG GIRL ON THE MUTANT ISLAND OF UTOPIA.
I KNEW YOU WERE GOING TO SAY THAT.
WHAT'S THE PLAN, CAPTAIN?


TONY STARK AND A HAND-SELECTED SPECIALTY BRAIN TRUST WILL BE WORKING TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO INTERCEPT OR CONTAIN THE FORCE.
THOR WILL BE LEADING A CREW INTO SPACE TO TRY AND INTERCEPT.
THE REST OF US WILL BE HEADING TO UTOPIA, RIGHT NOW, TO EXTRACT THE GIRL OFF THE ISLAND AND OFF THE PLANET.
CYCLOPS ISN'T GOING TO LIKE THAT.
NOT SURE I DO.
WHY?
THERE ARE MUTANTS WHO MAY VIEW THE PHOENIX AS SOMETHING OF GOOD FORTUNE...
I'M NOT WILLING TO TAKE THE CHANCE TO FIND OUT IF THEY'RE RIGHT.
I AM HOPING THAT REASON AND LOGIC WILL PREVAIL.
I DON'T THINK YOU UNDERSTAND CYCLOPS' RELATIONSHIP WITH THIS GIRL AND THIS PHOENIX THING.
I DO.
HE'S GOING TO EYEBEAM YOU RIGHT OFF HIS FRONT LAWN.
WE'RE AWARE THAT MAY BE THE CASE.
IT WILL BE THE CASE.
I WILL TRY EVERYTHING IN MY POWER NOT TO LET THAT HAPPEN...
BUT IN CASE IT DOES, I'M GOING TO NEED THE REST OF YOU TO SUIT UP AND GET READY.
HULK?

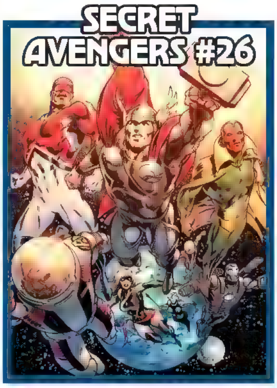

LET'S BE READY FOR A FULL-SCALE MUTANT ATTACK AND BE PLEASANTLY SURPRISED IF ONE DOESN'T HAPPEN.
AND, YES, FOR SOME OF YOU THIS MAY MEAN FIGHTING FRIENDS.
PEOPLE WE ADMIRE.
BUT WE'RE TALKING ABOUT STOPPING THE END OF DAYS.
EVERYTHING WE'VE BEEN FIGHTING FOR IS ALL FOR NAUGHT... UNLESS WE DO THIS THING.
Ragnarok on Earth.
EXACTLY.
YOU'RE NOT ENLISTED.
I CAN'T MAKE ANY OF YOU DO THIS. BUT I NEED YOU.
I NEED YOU TO FIGHT THIS FIGHT ALL THE WAY TO THE END.
THE WORLD NEEDS YOU.
AVENGERS...
ASSEMBLE.


TO BE CONTINUED...

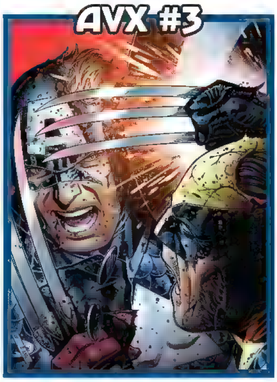


AVENGERS #25

BATTLE ON UTOPIA!


SECRET AVENGERS #26

FIRST STRIKE ON THE PHOENIX!


AVX #3

CAPTAIN AMERICA VS. WOLVERINE!

BRIAN MICHAEL **BENDIS** WRITER

MIKE **DEODATO** & WILL **CONRAD** ARTISTS

RAIN **BEREDO** COLOR ART

VC'S JOE **CARAMAGNA** LETTERS & PRODUCTION

MIKE **DEODATO** & RAIN **BEREDO** COVER ARTISTS

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MARVEL

25

A vs X

THE NEW AVENGERS

BENDIS
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EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES, UNITED AGAINST A COMMON THREAT! ON THAT DAY THE AVENGERS WERE BORN, TO FIGHT FOES THAT NO SINGLE HERO COULD WITHSTAND!

NEW AVENGERS

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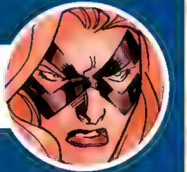
MS. MARVEL

THING

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WOLVERINE

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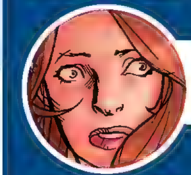
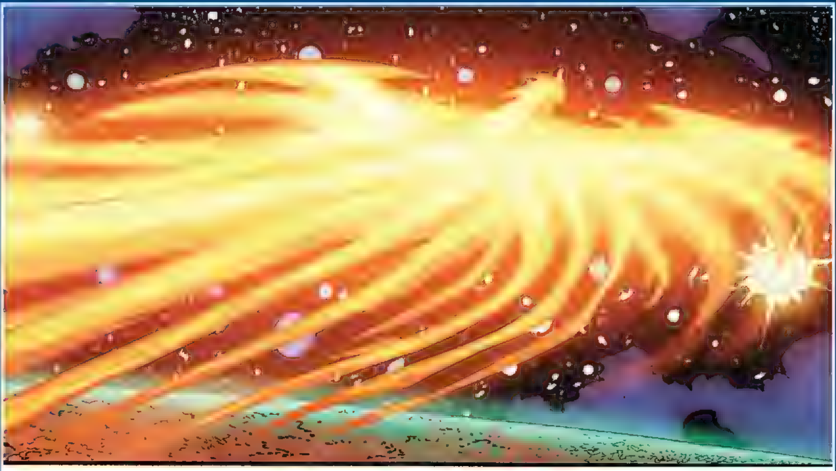
MOCKINGBIRD


JESSICA JONES

VICTORIA HAND

DAREDEVIL



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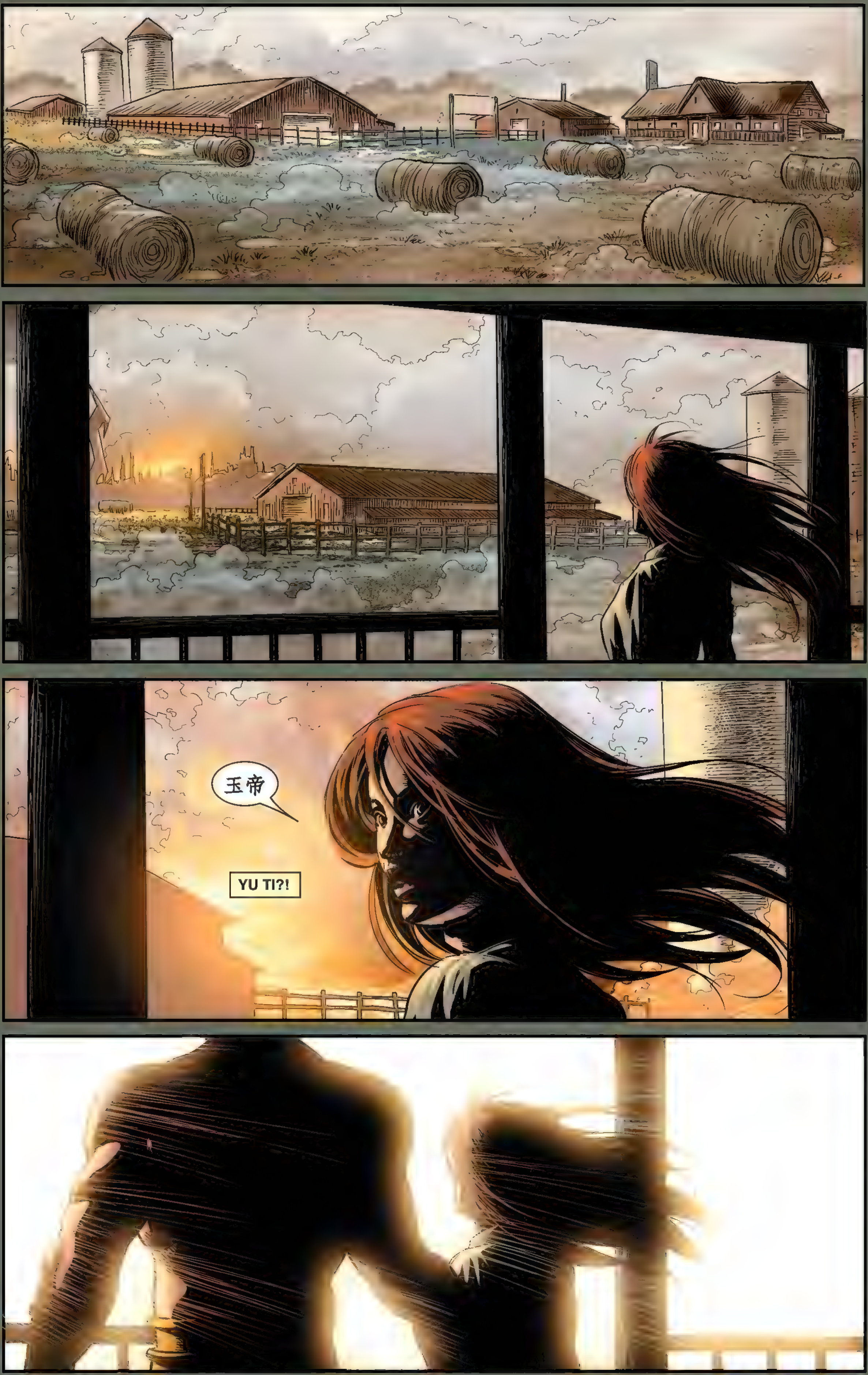
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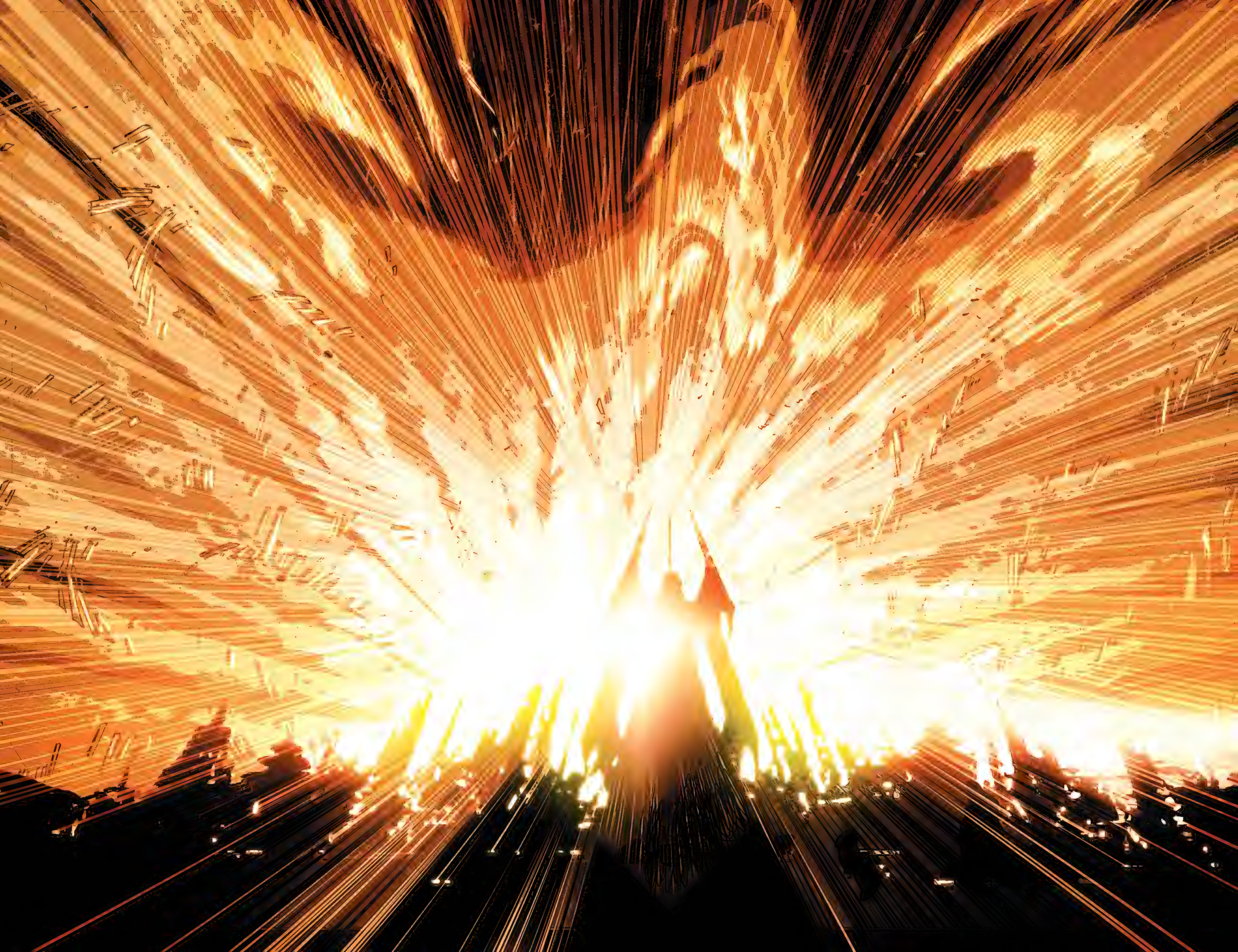
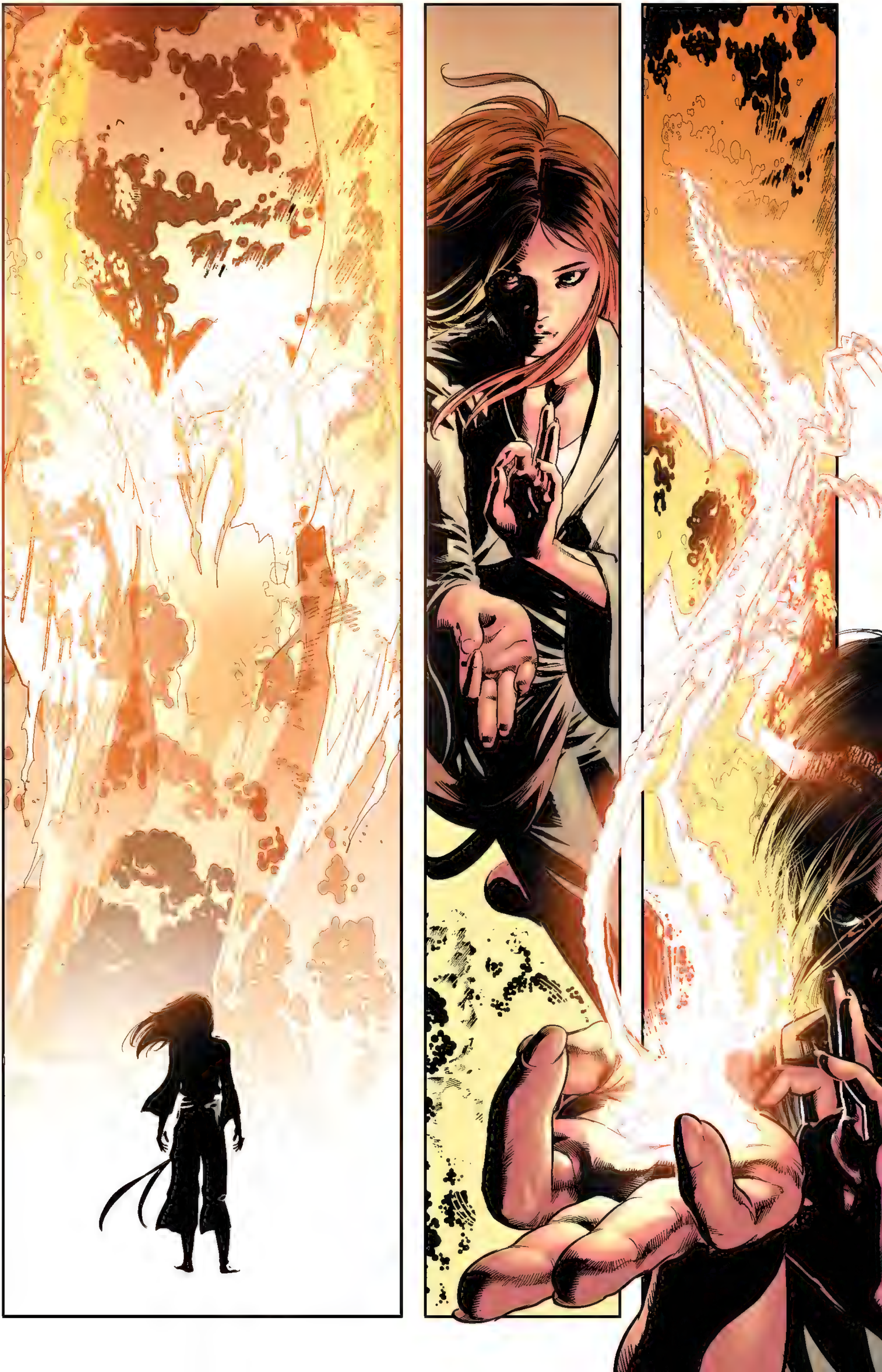
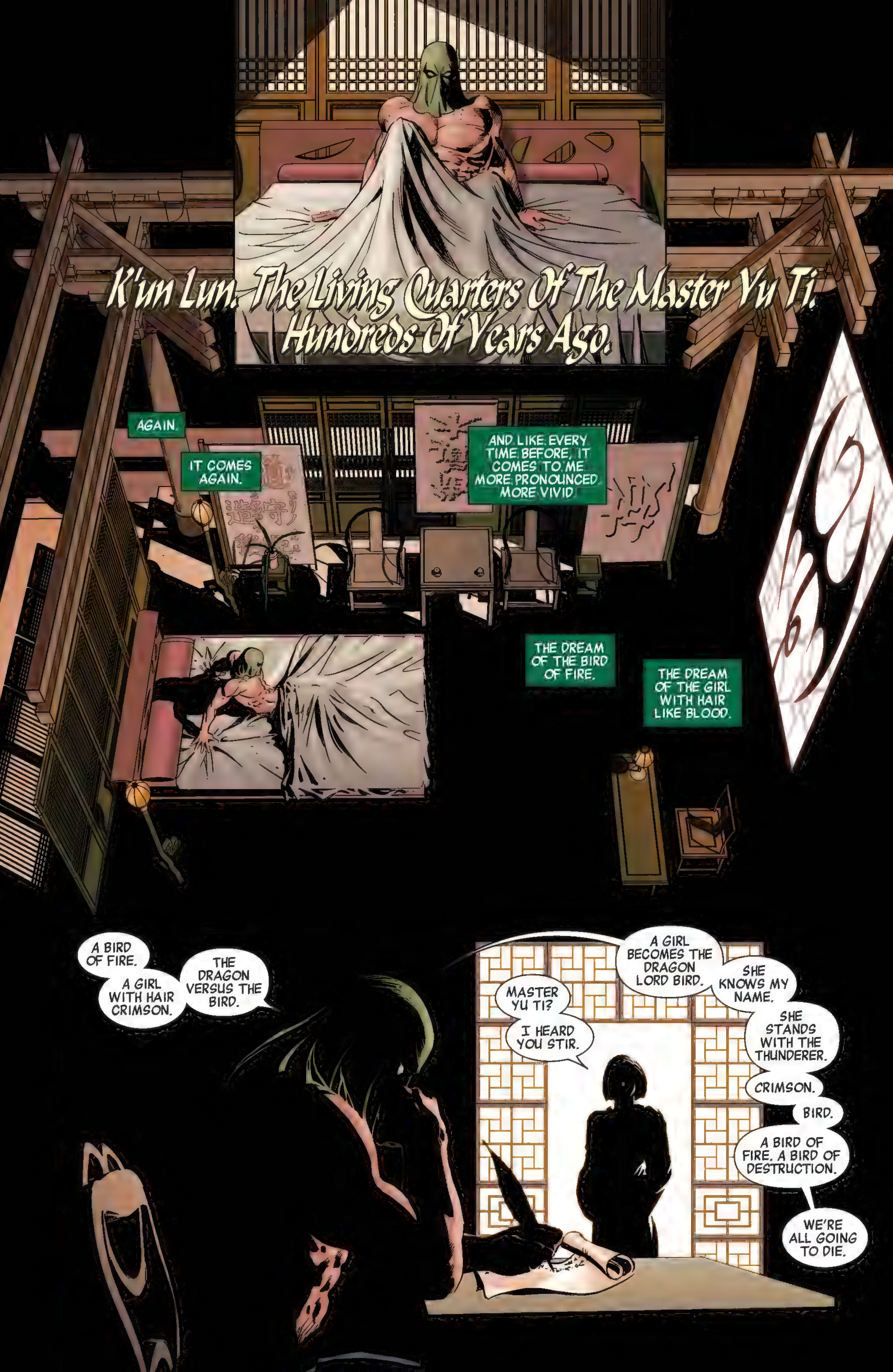
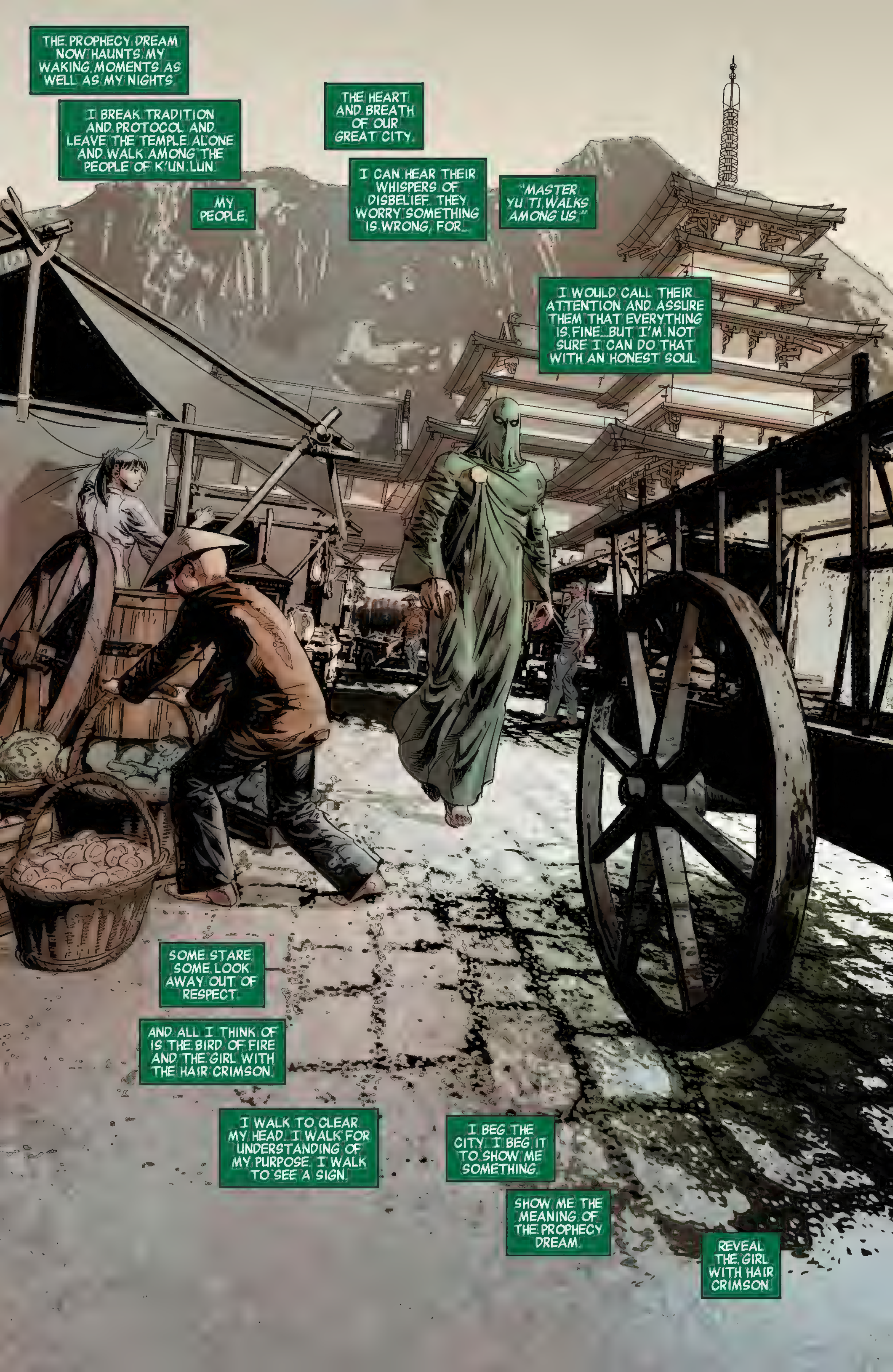
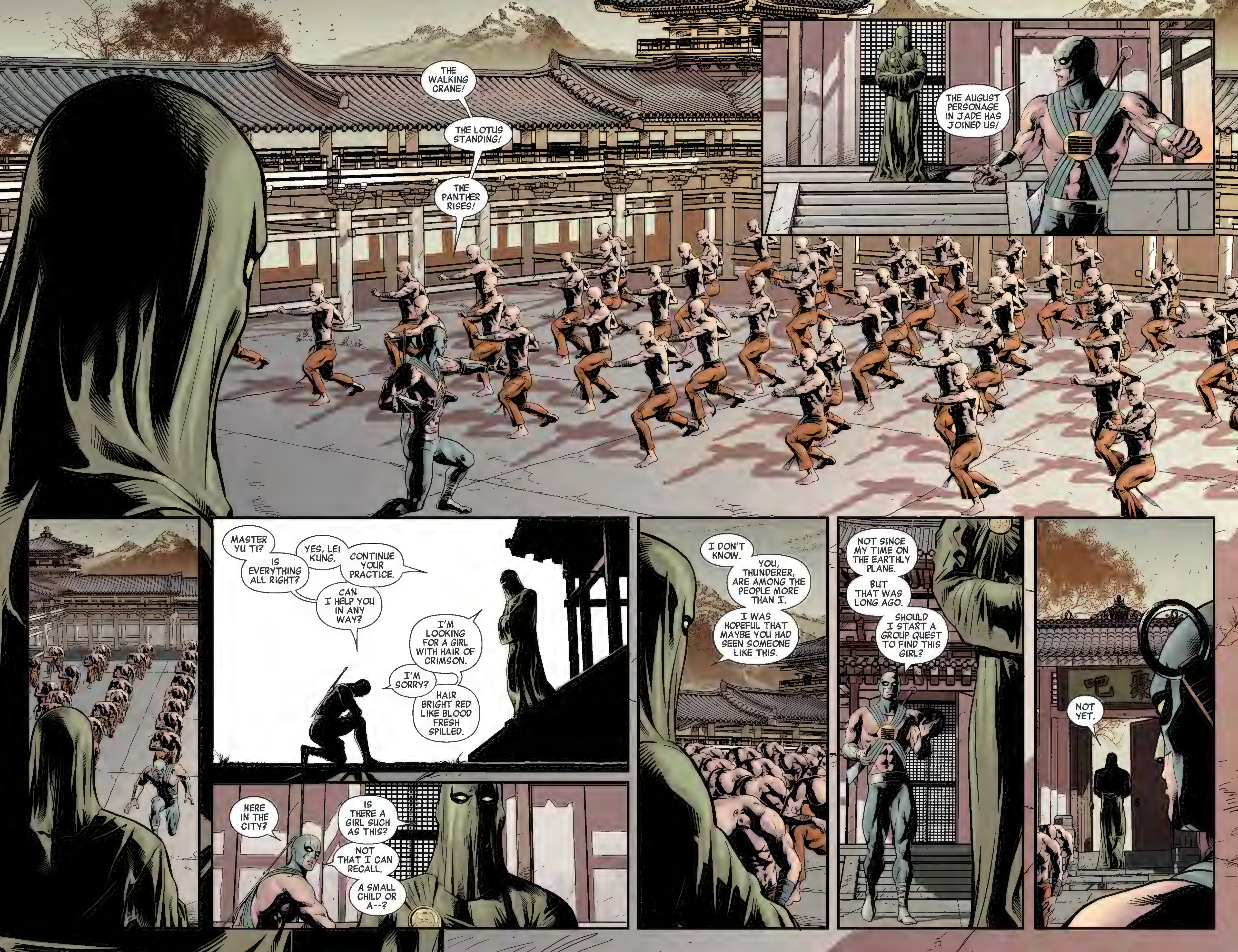
YU TI?!

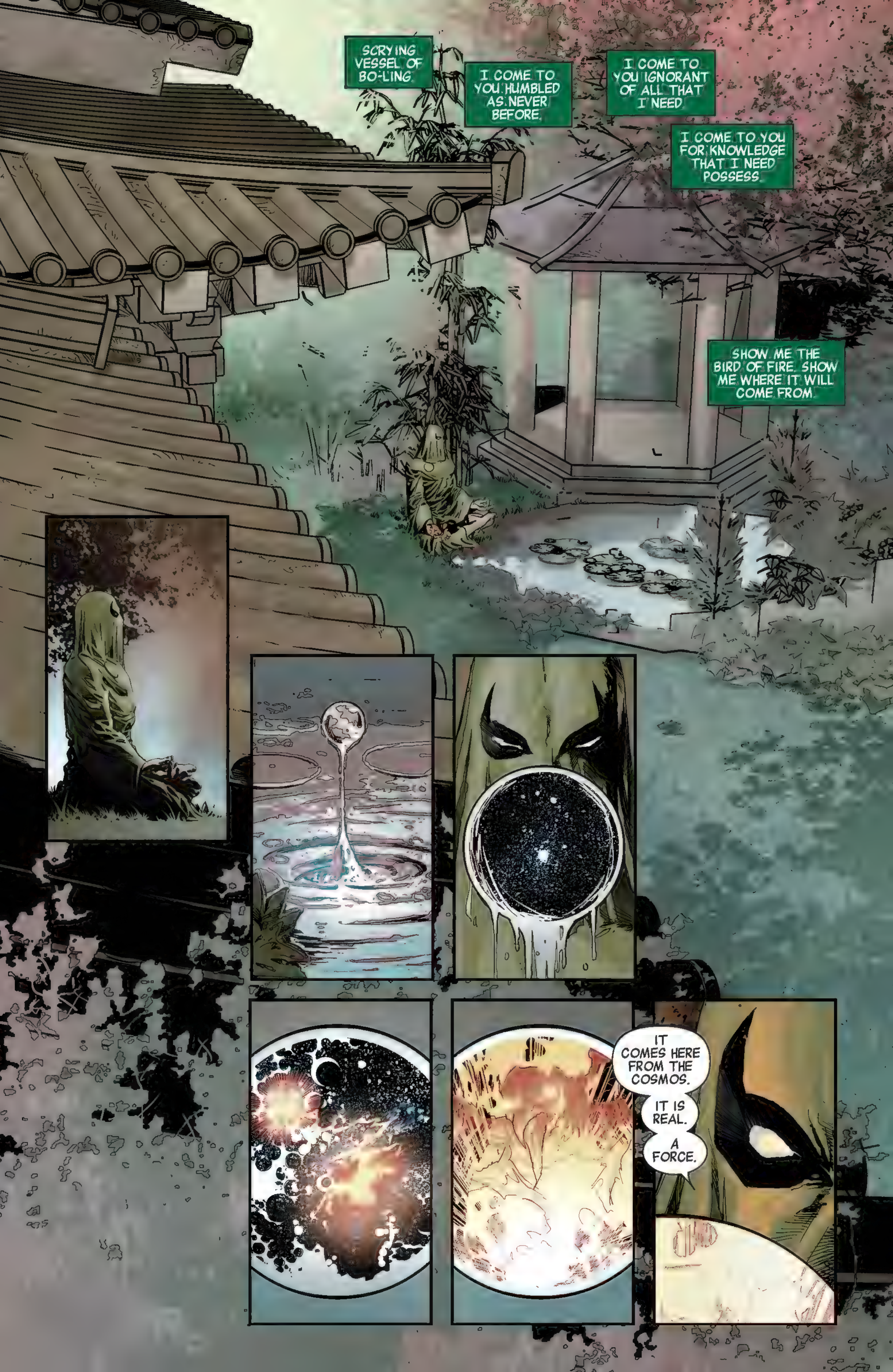


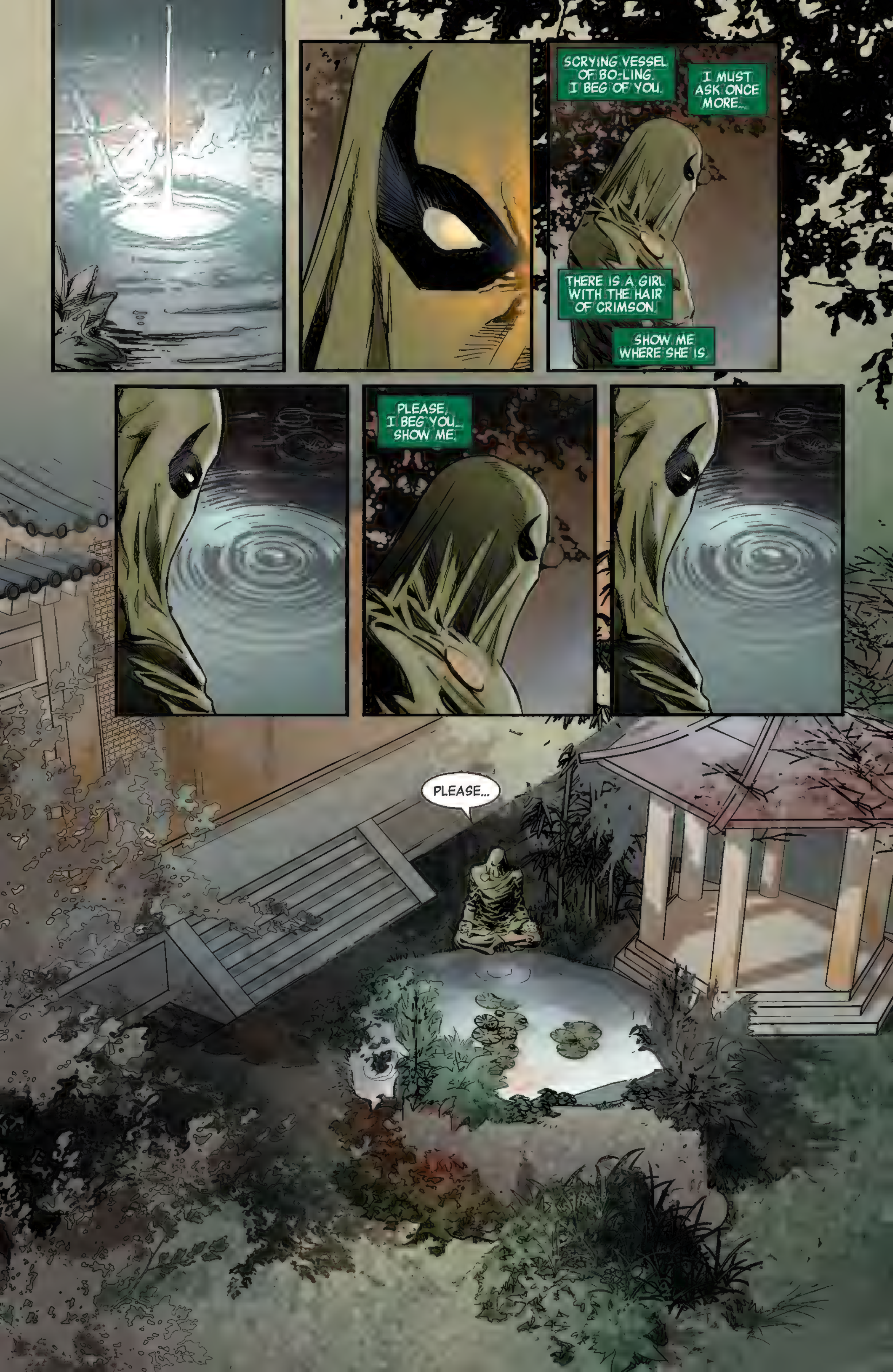


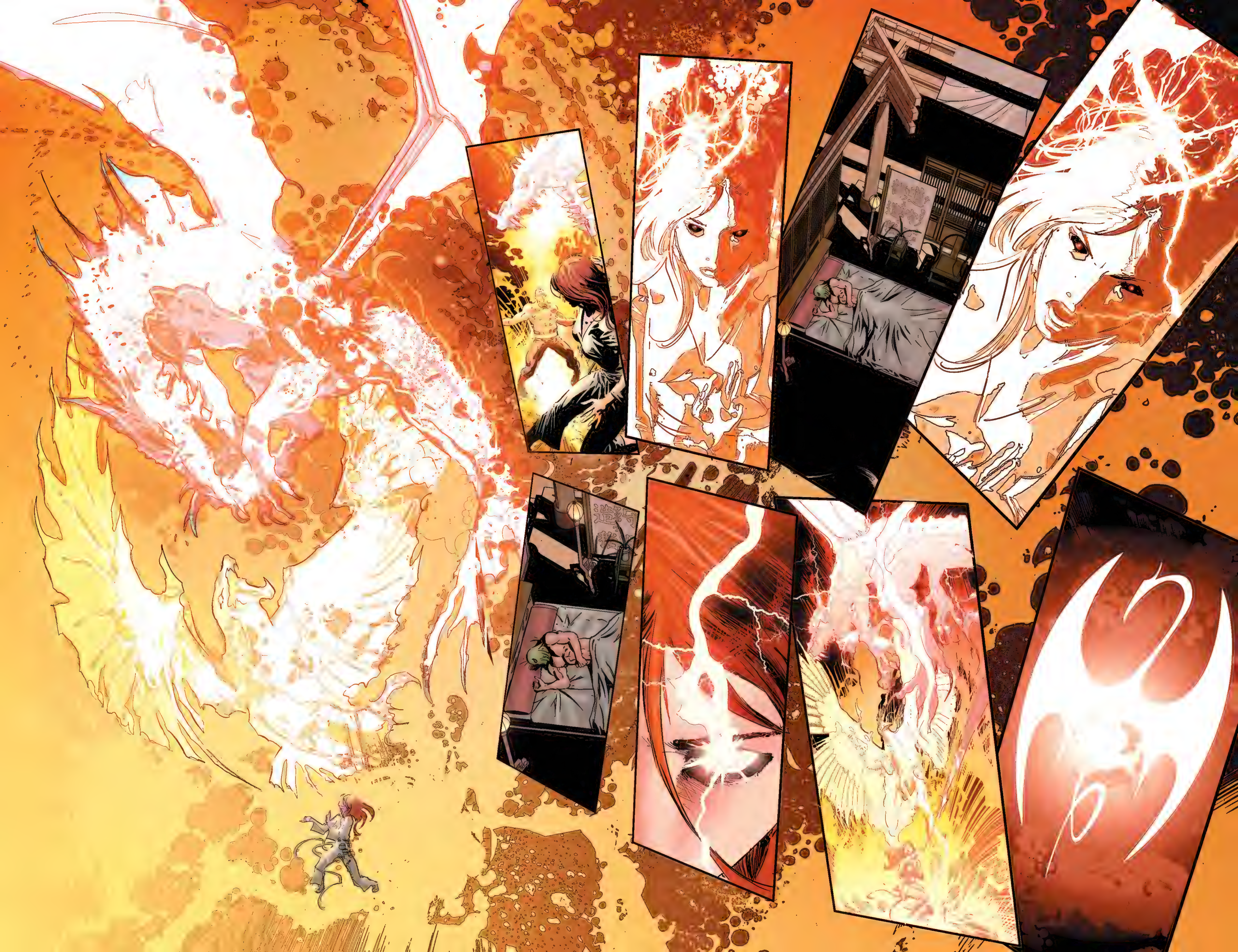

K'un Lun. The Living Quarters Of The Master Yu Ti. Hundreds Of Years Ago.
AGAIN.
IT COMES AGAIN.
AND LIKE EVERY TIME BEFORE, IT COMES TO ME MORE PRONOUNCED. MORE VIVID.
THE DREAM OF THE BIRD OF FIRE.
THE DREAM OF THE GIRL WITH HAIR LIKE BLOOD.
A BIRD OF FIRE.
A GIRL WITH HAIR CRIMSON.
THE DRAGON VERSUS THE BIRD.
MASTER YU TI?
I HEARD YOU STIR.
A GIRL BECOMES THE DRAGON LORD BIRD.
SHE KNOWS MY NAME.
SHE STANDS WITH THE THUNDERER.
CRIMSON.
BIRD.
A BIRD OF FIRE. A BIRD OF DESTRUCTION.
WE'RE ALL GOING TO DIE.

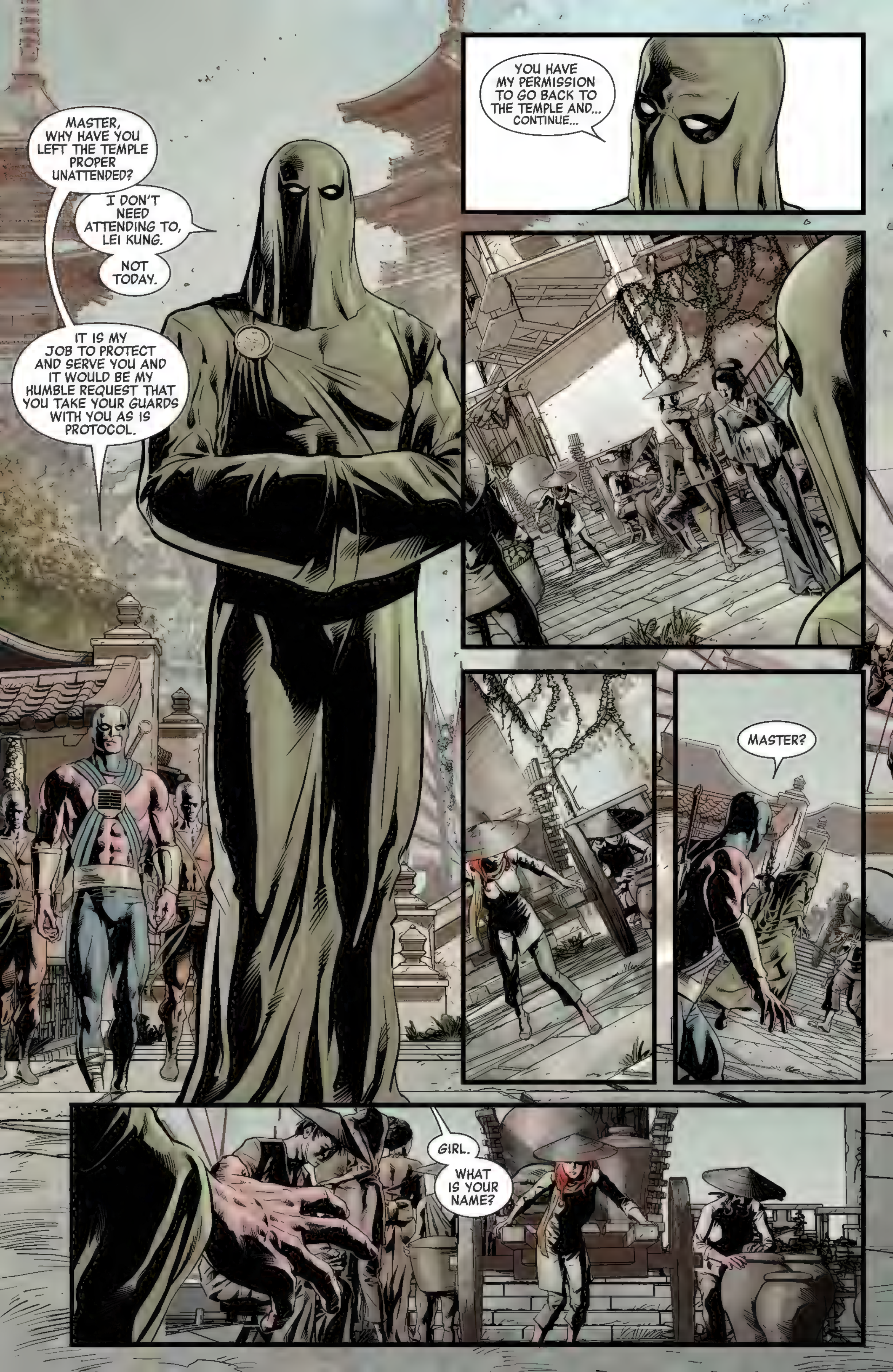

THE PROPHECY DREAM NOW HAUNTS MY WAKING MOMENTS AS WELL AS MY NIGHTS.
I BREAK TRADITION AND PROTOCOL AND LEAVE THE TEMPLE ALONE AND WALK AMONG THE PEOPLE OF K'UN LUN.
MY PEOPLE.
THE HEART AND BREATH OF OUR GREAT CITY.
I CAN HEAR THEIR WHISPERS OF DISBELIEF. THEY WORRY SOMETHING IS WRONG, FOR...
"MASTER YU TI WALKS AMONG US."
I WOULD CALL THEIR ATTENTION AND ASSURE THEM THAT EVERYTHING IS FINE...BUT I'M NOT SURE I CAN DO THAT WITH AN HONEST SOUL.
SOME STARE. SOME LOOK AWAY OUT OF RESPECT.
AND ALL I THINK OF IS THE BIRD OF FIRE AND THE GIRL WITH THE HAIR CRIMSON.
I WALK TO CLEAR MY HEAD. I WALK FOR UNDERSTANDING OF MY PURPOSE. I WALK TO SEE A SIGN.
I BEG THE CITY. I BEG IT TO SHOW ME SOMETHING.
SHOW ME THE MEANING OF THE PROPHECY DREAM.
REVEAL THE GIRL WITH HAIR CRIMSON.

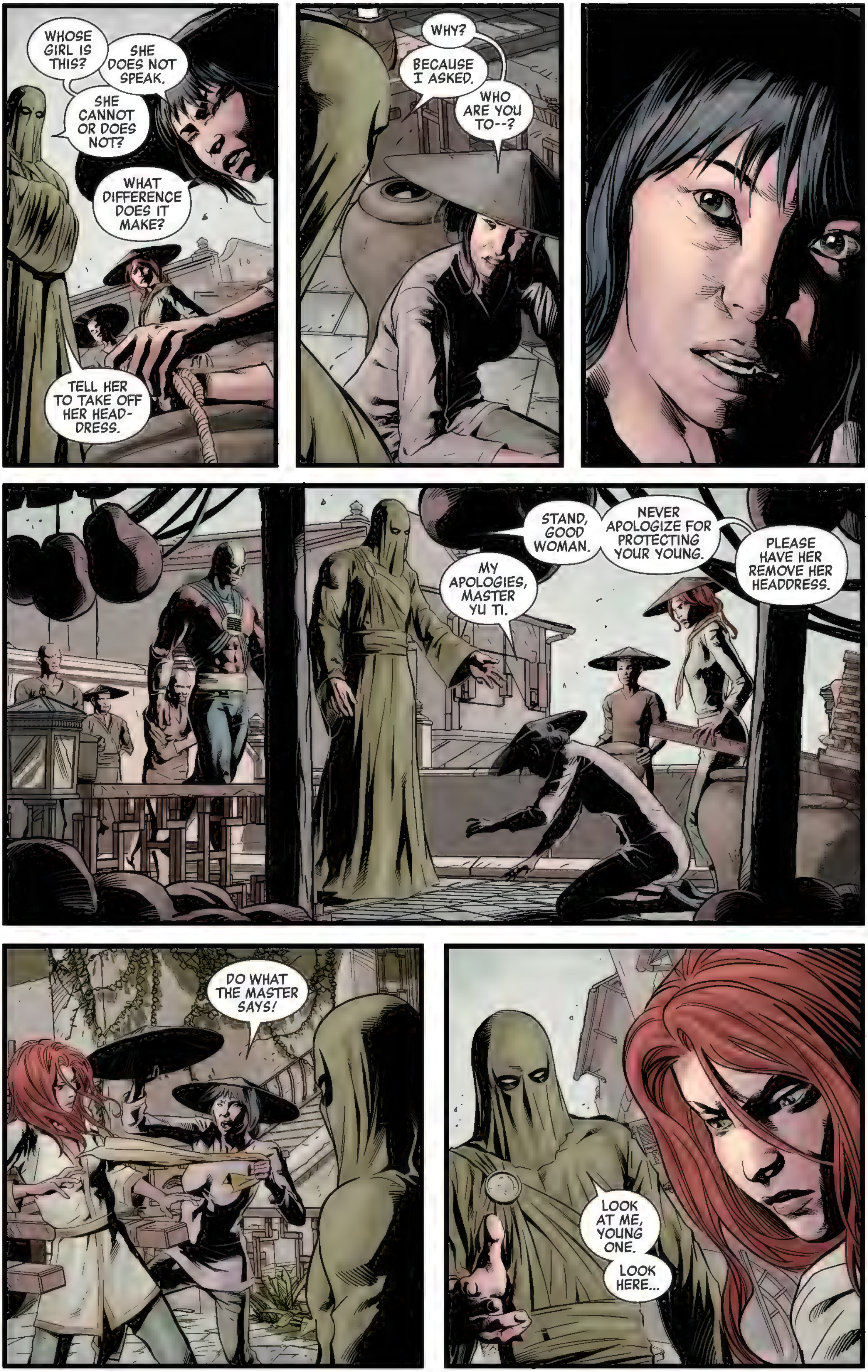

THE WALKING CRANE!
THE LOTUS STANDING!
THE PANTHER RISES!
THE AUGUST PERSONAGE IN JADE HAS JOINED US!
MASTER YU TI? IS EVERYTHING ALL RIGHT?
YES, LEI KUNG.
CONTINUE YOUR PRACTICE.
CAN I HELP YOU IN ANY WAY?
I'M LOOKING FOR A GIRL WITH HAIR OF CRIMSON.
I'M SORRY?
HAIR BRIGHT RED LIKE BLOOD FRESH SPILLED.
HERE IN THE CITY?
IS THERE A GIRL SUCH AS THIS?
NOT THAT I CAN RECALL.
A SMALL CHILD OR A--?
I DON'T KNOW.
YOU, THUNDERER, ARE AMONG THE PEOPLE MORE THAN I.
I WAS HOPEFUL THAT MAYBE YOU HAD SEEN SOMEONE LIKE THIS.
NOT SINCE MY TIME ON THE EARTHLY PLANE.
BUT THAT WAS LONG AGO.
SHOULD I START A GROUP QUEST TO FIND THIS GIRL?
NOT YET.

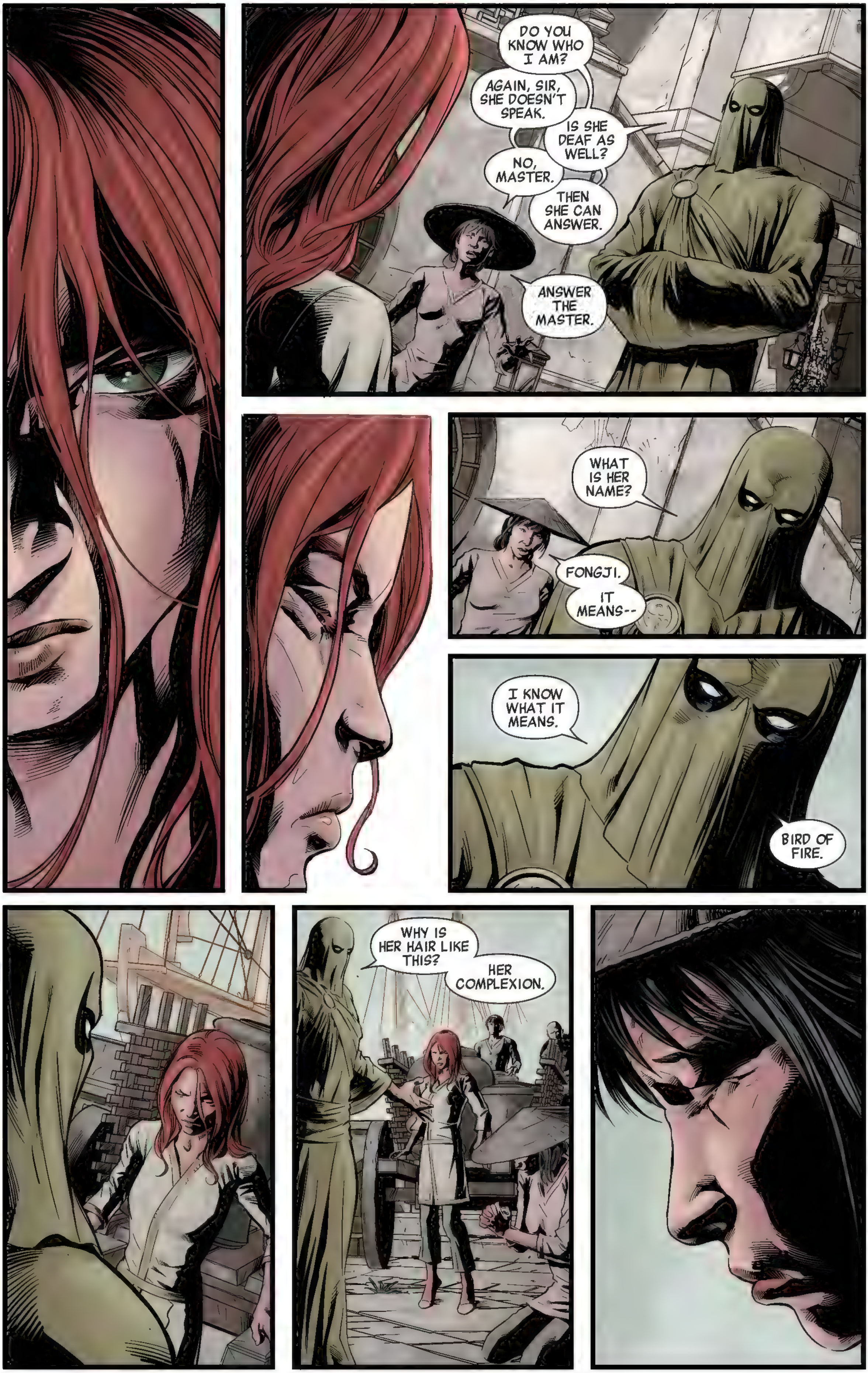

SCRYING VESSEL OF BO-LING.
I COME TO YOU HUMBLED AS NEVER BEFORE.
I COME TO YOU IGNORANT OF ALL THAT I NEED.
I COME TO YOU FOR KNOWLEDGE THAT I NEED POSSESS.
SHOW ME THE BIRD OF FIRE. SHOW ME WHERE IT WILL COME FROM.
IT COMES HERE FROM THE COSMOS.
IT IS REAL.
A FORCE.

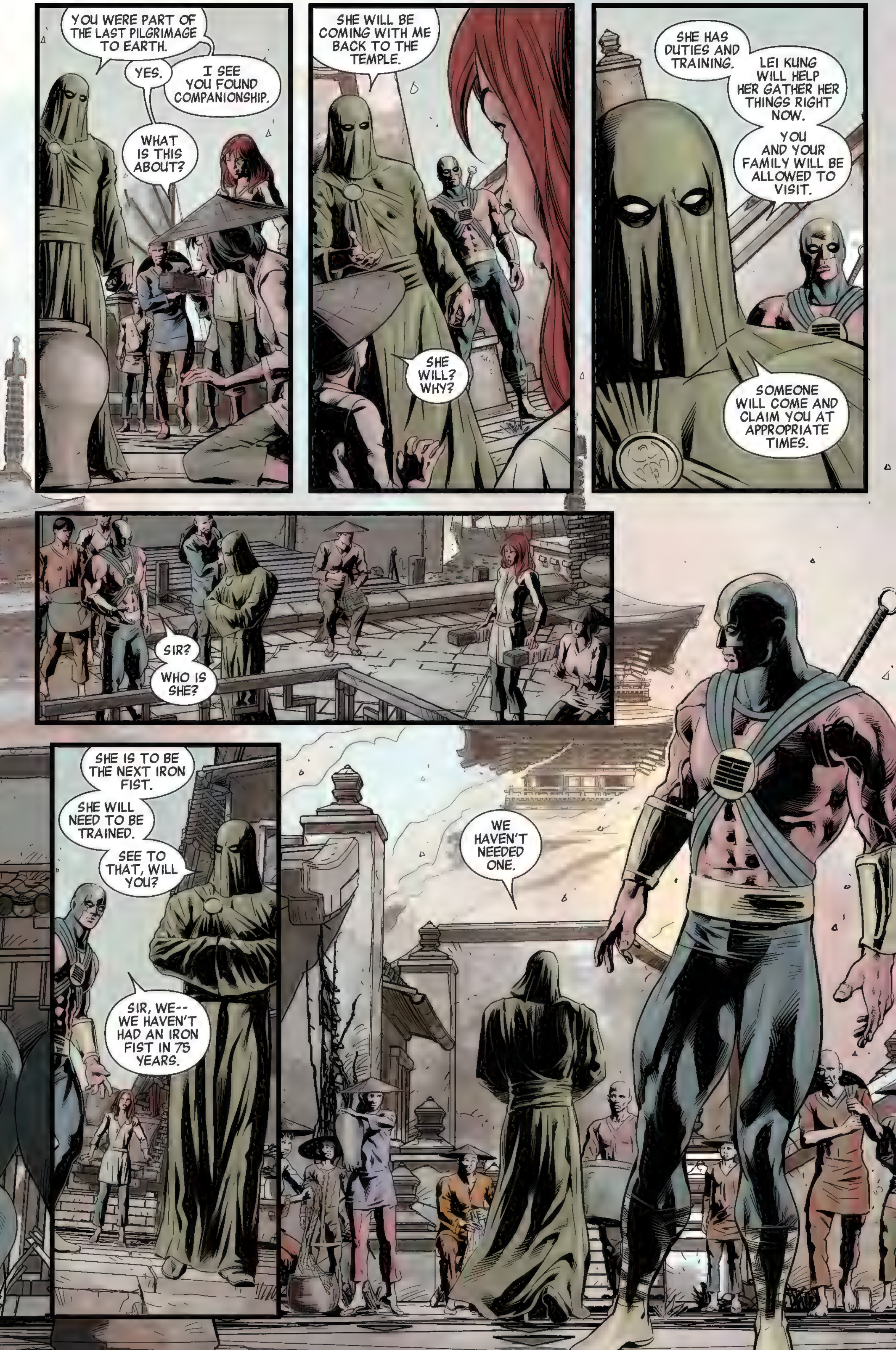

SCRYING VESSEL OF BO-LING, I BEG OF YOU.
I MUST ASK ONCE MORE...
THERE IS A GIRL WITH THE HAIR OF CRIMSON.
SHOW ME WHERE SHE IS.
PLEASE, I BEG YOU... SHOW ME.
PLEASE...

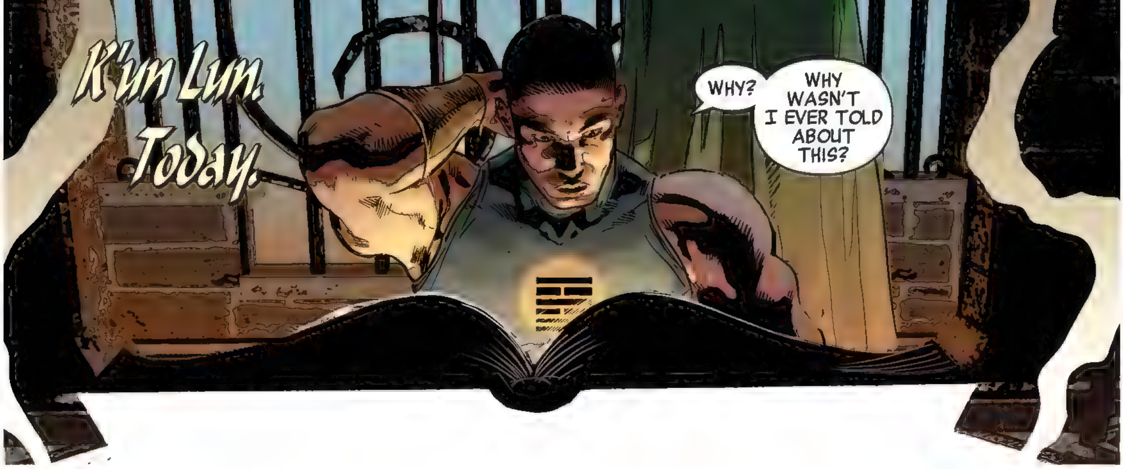


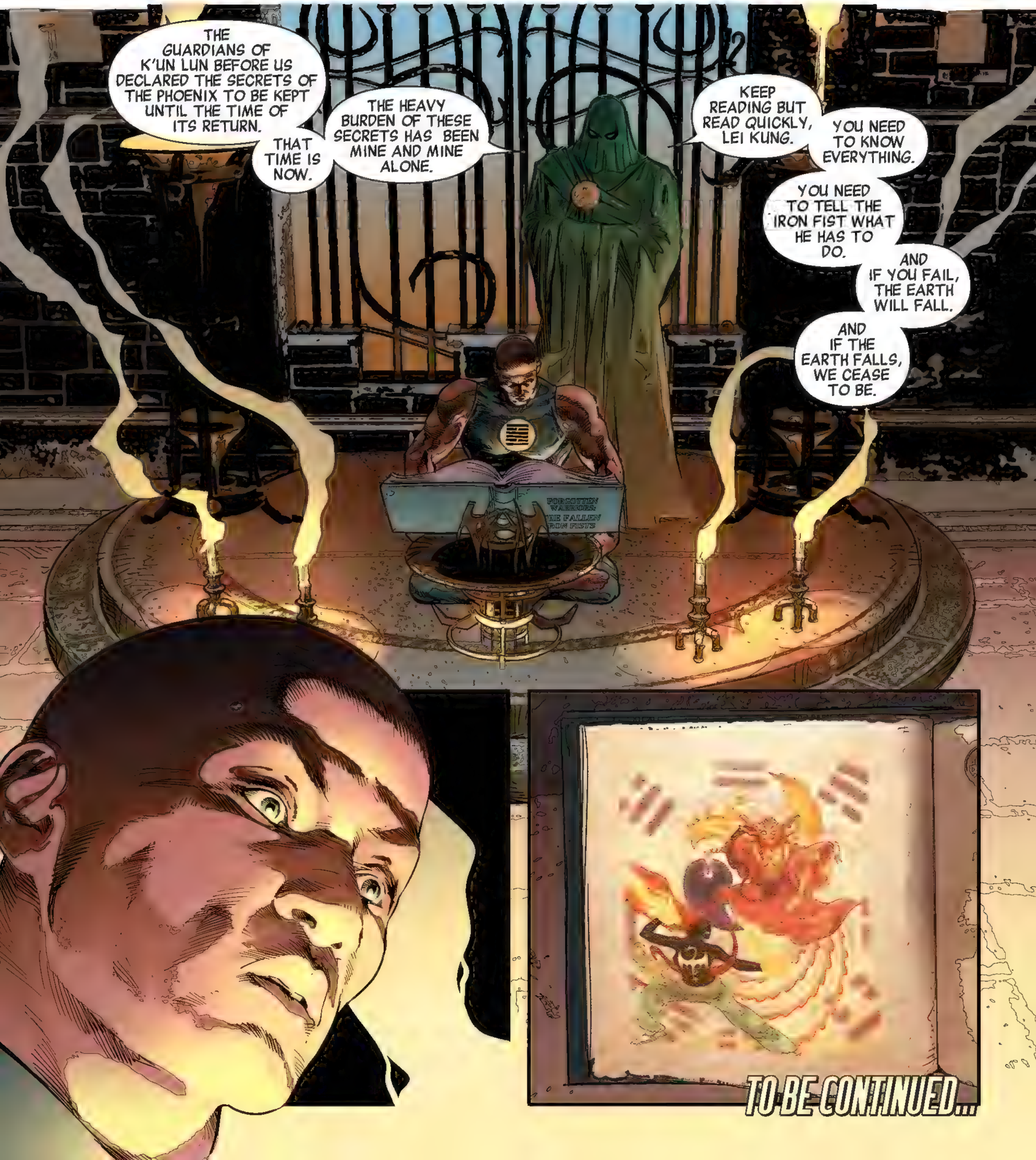

MASTER, WHY HAVE YOU LEFT THE TEMPLE PROPER UNATTENDED?
I DON'T NEED ATTENDING TO, LEI KUNG.
NOT TODAY.
IT IS MY JOB TO PROTECT AND SERVE YOU AND IT WOULD BE MY HUMBLE REQUEST THAT YOU TAKE YOUR GUARDS WITH YOU AS IS PROTOCOL.
YOU HAVE MY PERMISSION TO GO BACK TO THE TEMPLE AND... CONTINUE...
MASTER?
GIRL.
WHAT IS YOUR NAME?

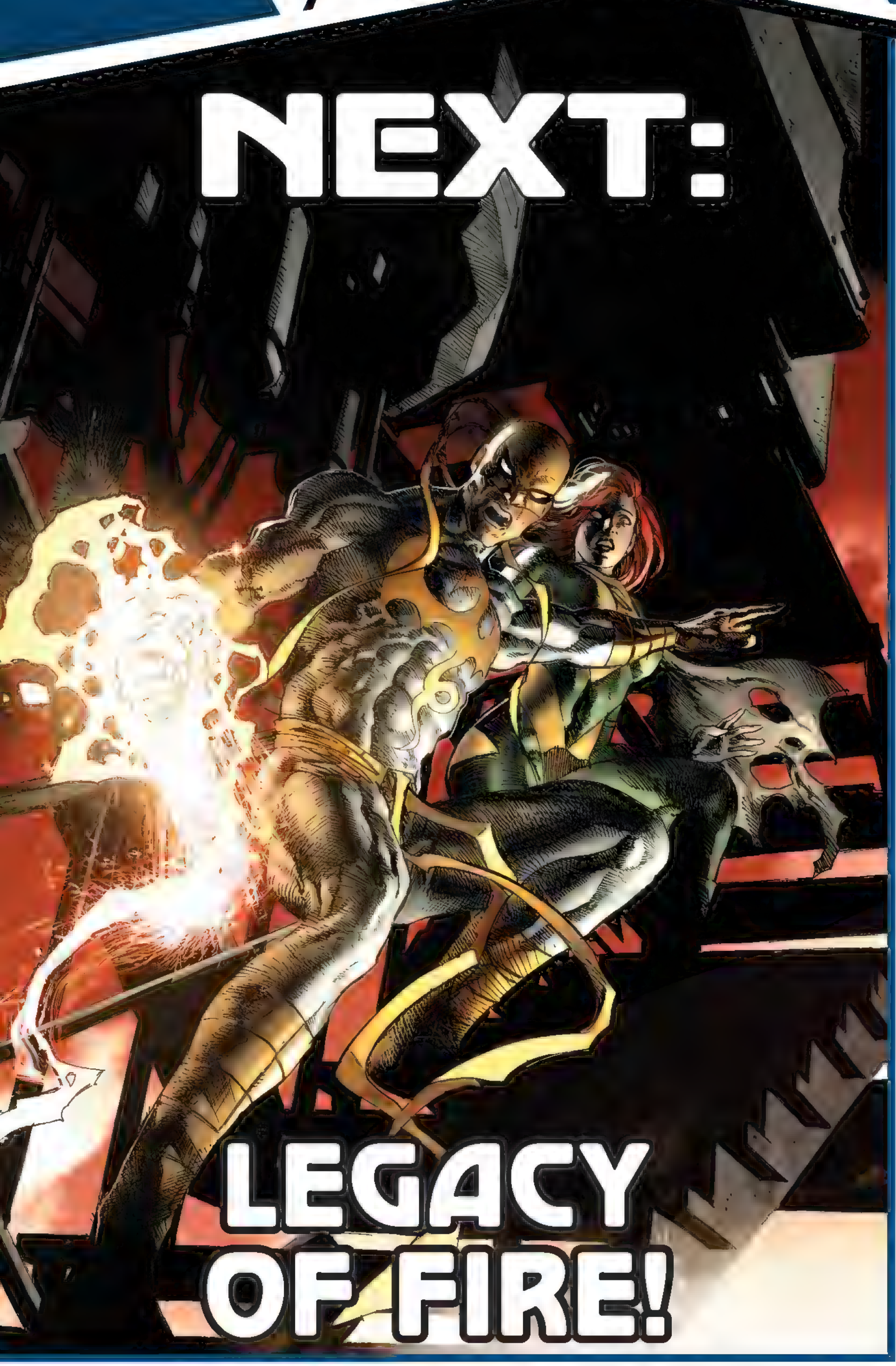

WHOSE GIRL IS THIS?
SHE DOES NOT SPEAK.
SHE CANNOT OR DOES NOT?
WHAT DIFFERENCE DOES IT MAKE?
TELL HER TO TAKE OFF HER HEAD-DRESS.
WHY?
BECAUSE I ASKED.
WHO ARE YOU TO--?
MY APOLOGIES, MASTER YU TI.
STAND, GOOD WOMAN.
NEVER APOLOGIZE FOR PROTECTING YOUR YOUNG.
PLEASE HAVE HER REMOVE HER HEADDRESS.
DO WHAT THE MASTER SAYS!
LOOK AT ME, YOUNG ONE.
LOOK HERE...


DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM?
AGAIN, SIR, SHE DOESN'T SPEAK.
IS SHE DEAF AS WELL?
NO, MASTER.
THEN SHE CAN ANSWER.
ANSWER THE MASTER.
WHAT IS HER NAME?
FONGJI.
IT MEANS--
I KNOW WHAT IT MEANS.
BIRD OF FIRE.
WHY IS HER HAIR LIKE THIS?
HER COMPLEXION.


YOU WERE PART OF THE LAST PILGRIMAGE TO EARTH.
YES.
I SEE YOU FOUND COMPANIONSHIP.
WHAT IS THIS ABOUT?
SHE WILL BE COMING WITH ME BACK TO THE TEMPLE.
SHE WILL? WHY?
SHE HAS DUTIES AND TRAINING.
LEI KUNG WILL HELP HER GATHER HER THINGS RIGHT NOW.
YOU AND YOUR FAMILY WILL BE ALLOWED TO VISIT.
SOMEONE WILL COME AND CLAIM YOU AT APPROPRIATE TIMES.
SIR?
WHO IS SHE?
SHE IS TO BE THE NEXT IRON FIST.
SHE WILL NEED TO BE TRAINED.
SEE TO THAT, WILL YOU?
SIR, WE-- WE HAVEN'T HAD AN IRON FIST IN 75 YEARS.
WE HAVEN'T NEEDED ONE.

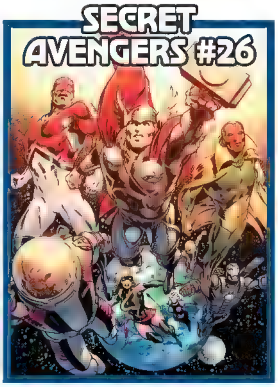

K'un Lun. Today.
WHY?
WHY WASN'T I EVER TOLD ABOUT THIS?


THE GUARDIANS OF K'UN LUN BEFORE US DECLARED THE SECRETS OF THE PHOENIX TO BE KEPT UNTIL THE TIME OF ITS RETURN.
THAT TIME IS NOW.
THE HEAVY BURDEN OF THESE SECRETS HAS BEEN MINE AND MINE ALONE.
KEEP READING BUT READ QUICKLY, LEI KUNG.
YOU NEED TO KNOW EVERYTHING.
YOU NEED TO TELL THE IRON FIST WHAT HE HAS TO DO.
AND IF YOU FAIL, THE EARTH WILL FALL.
AND IF THE EARTH FALLS, WE CEASE TO BE.
FORGOTTEN WARRIORS: HE FALLEN RON FISTS
TO BE CONTINUED...



AVX #3

CAPTAIN AMERICA VS. WOLVERINE!


SECRET AVENGERS #26

TO FACE THE PHOENIX!

AVENGERS ASSEMBLE #3

RISE OF THE ZODIAC!

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MARVEL

26

AvsX

BENDIS
DEODATO
BEREDO

THE NEW AVENGERS

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EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES, UNITED AGAINST A COMMON THREAT! ON THAT DAY THE AVENGERS WERE BORN, TO FIGHT FOES THAT NO SINGLE HERO COULD WITHSTAND!

NEW AVENGERS

WOLVERINE

LUKE CAGE

MS. MARVEL

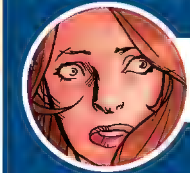
THING

IRON FIST

SPIDER-MAN

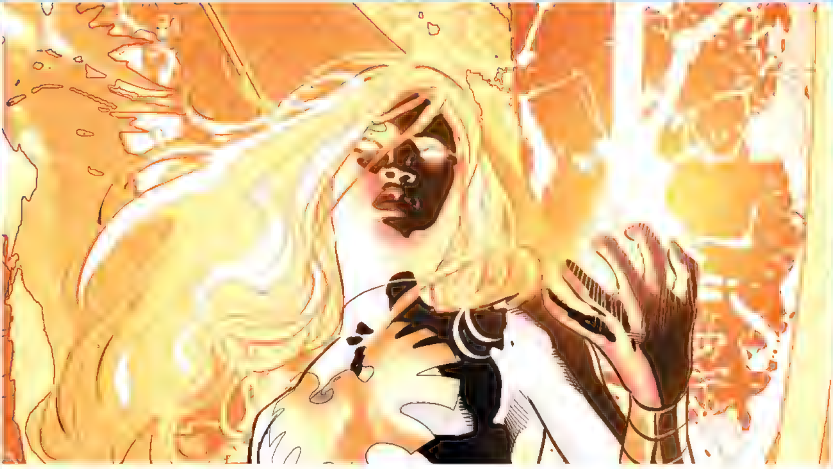
DR. STRANGE

MOCKINGBIRD


JESSICA JONES

VICTORIA HAND

DAREDEVIL



THE PHOENIX FORCE IS HEADED TOWARDS EARTH. THE AVENGERS BELIEVE THAT IT IS A DESTRUCTIVE FORCE THAT WILL LAY WASTE TO THE EARTH WHILE THE X-MEN BELIEVE IT IS A FORCE OF REBIRTH THAT COULD REIGNITE THE MUTANT RACE. BOTH BELIEVE IT WILL USE YOUNG MUTANT HOPE SUMMERS AS ITS AVATAR.

BUT THIS IS NOT THE PHOENIX'S FIRST VISIT TO EARTH. CENTURIES AGO, THERE WAS AN IRON FIST WHO WAS THE VESSEL FOR THE PHOENIX.

THIS IS HER STORY.

BRIAN MICHAEL **BENDIS**
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ARTIST

RAIN **BEREDO**
COLOR ART

VC'S JOE **CARAMAGNA**
LETTERS & PRODUCTION

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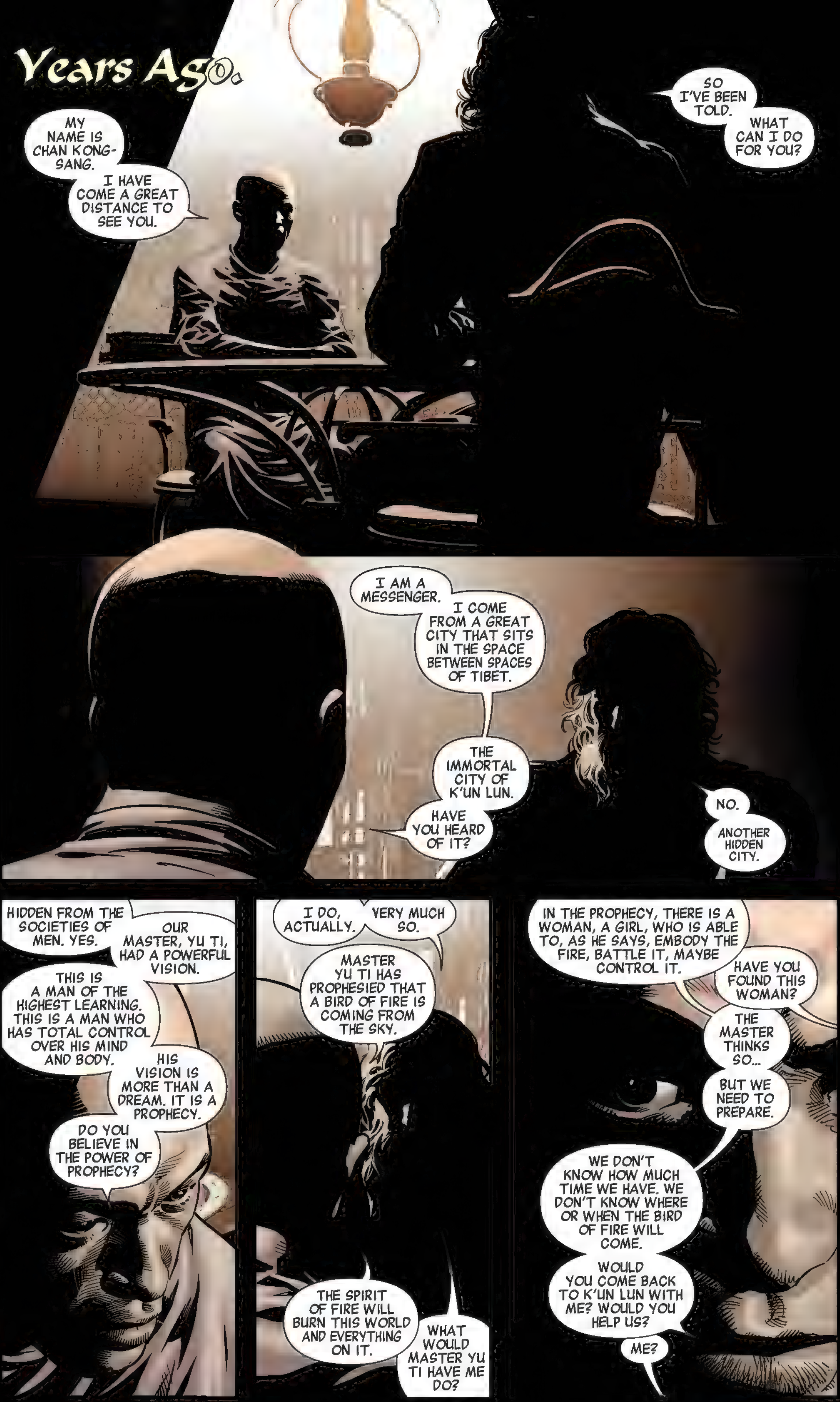
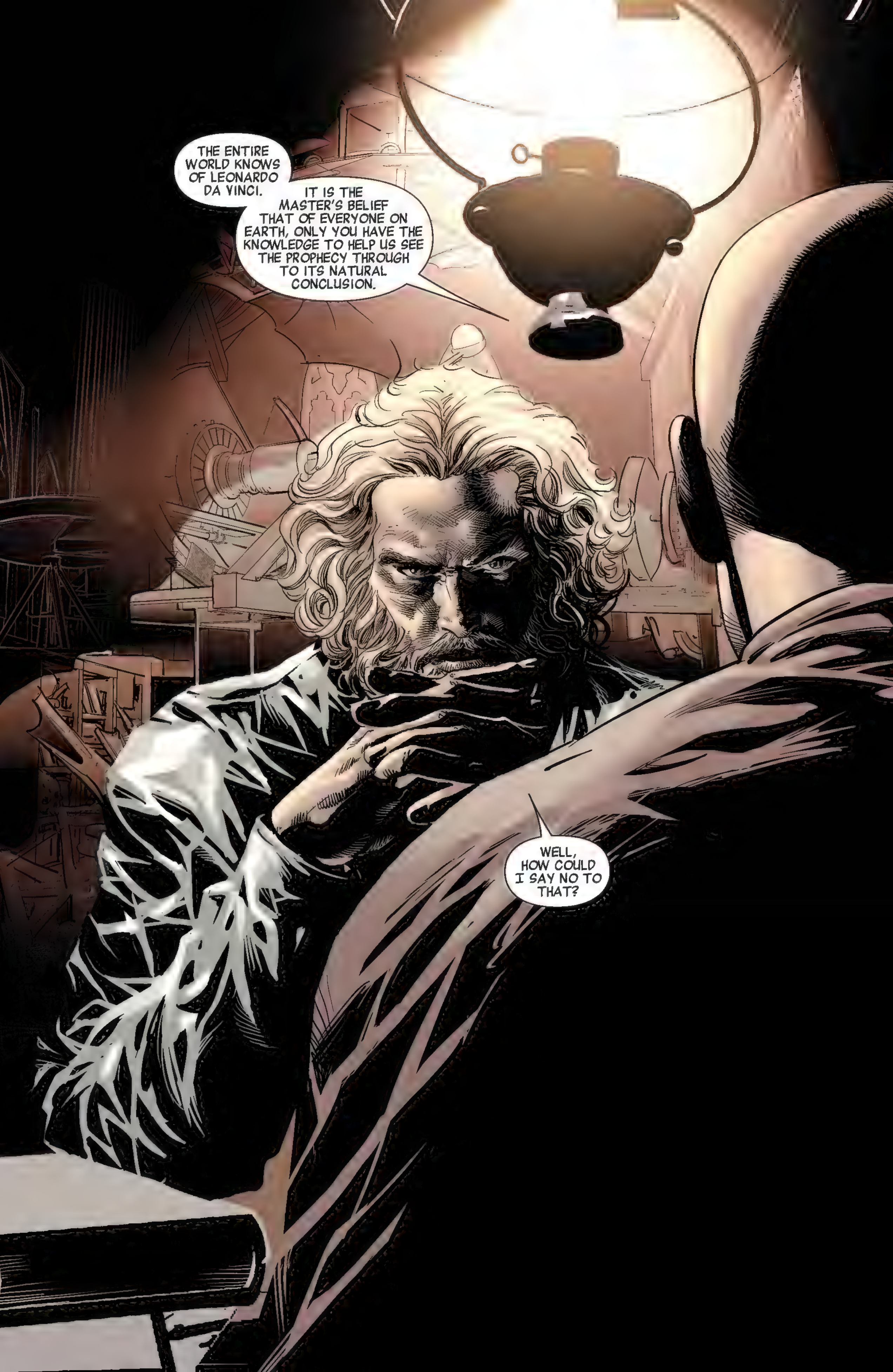
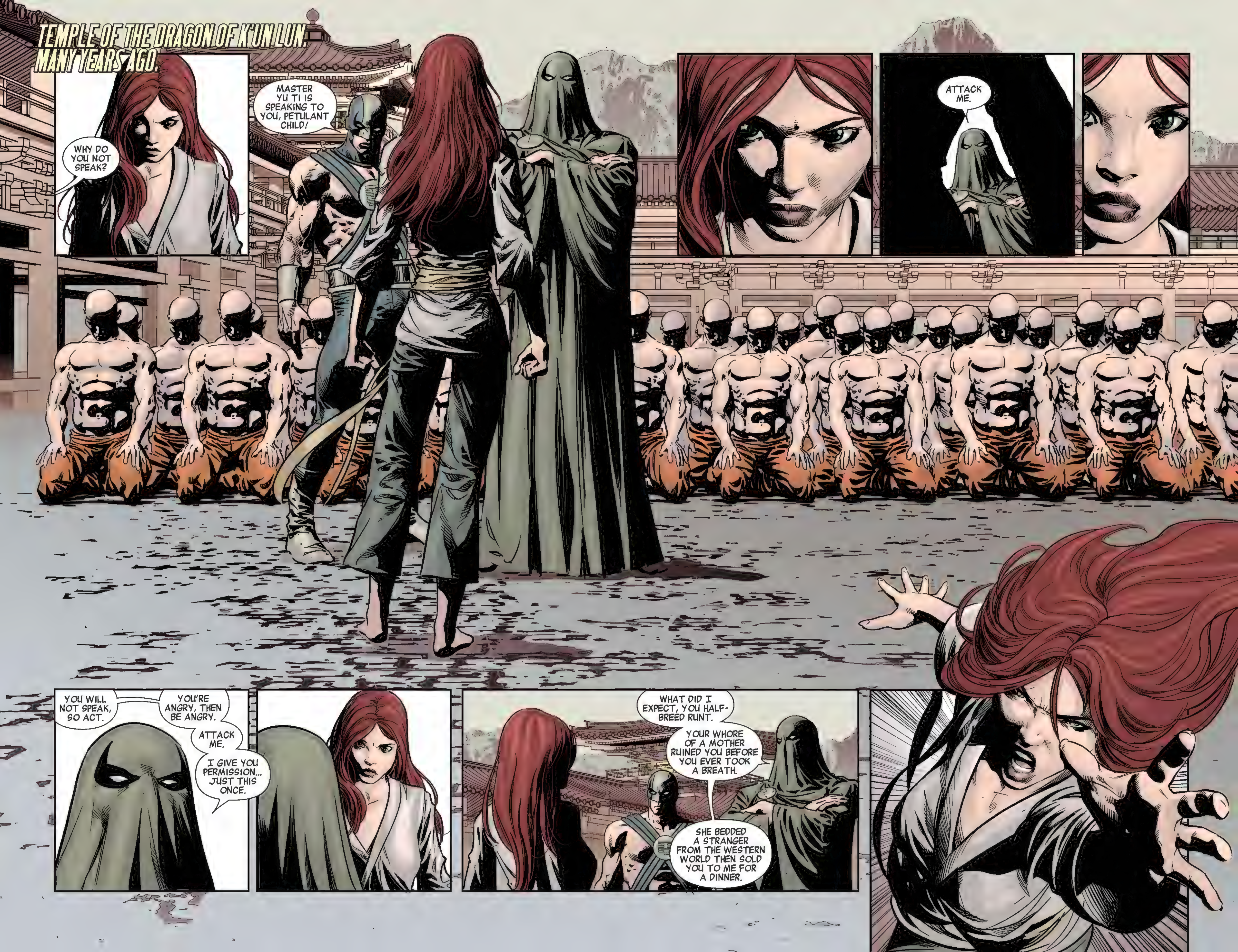
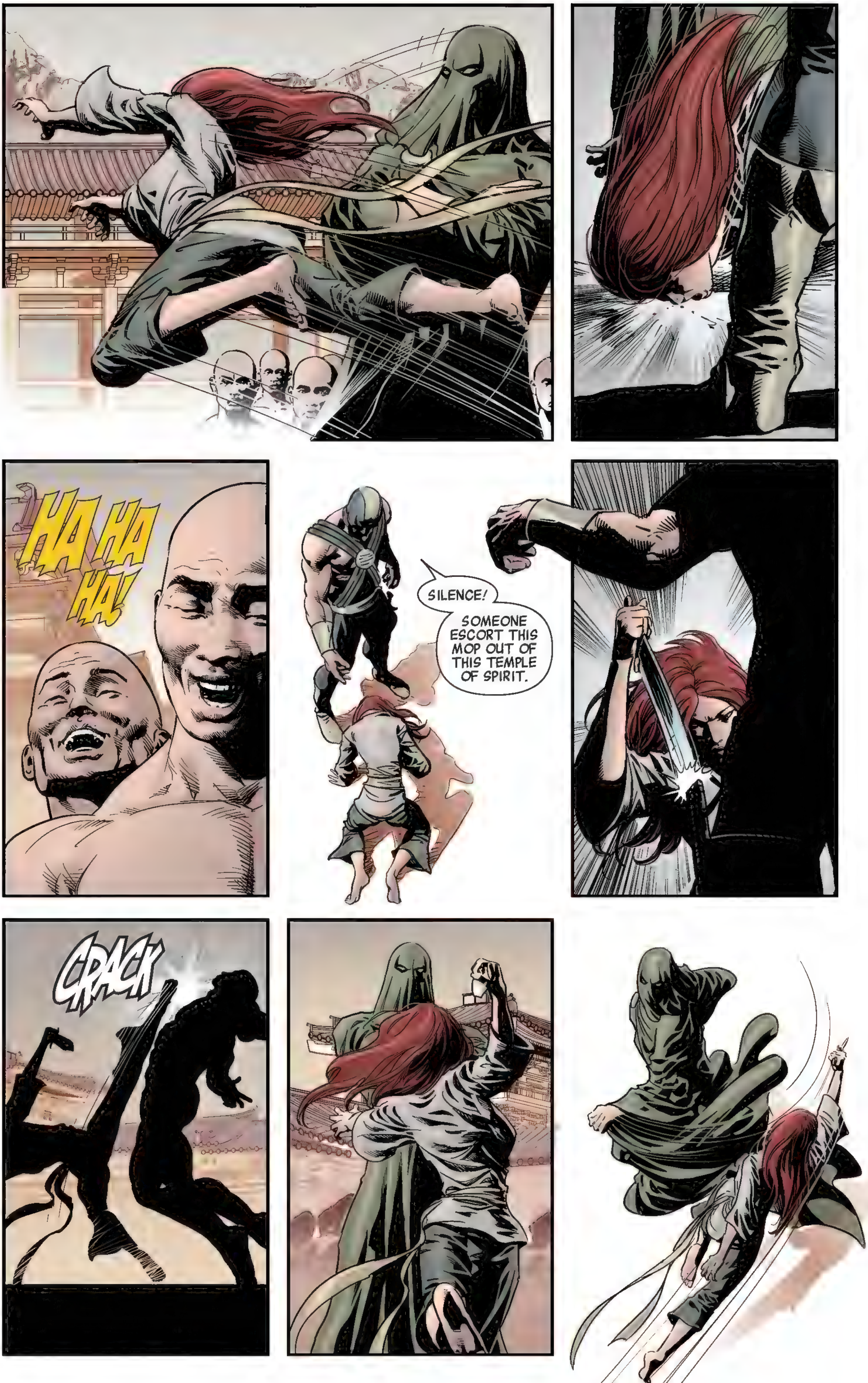
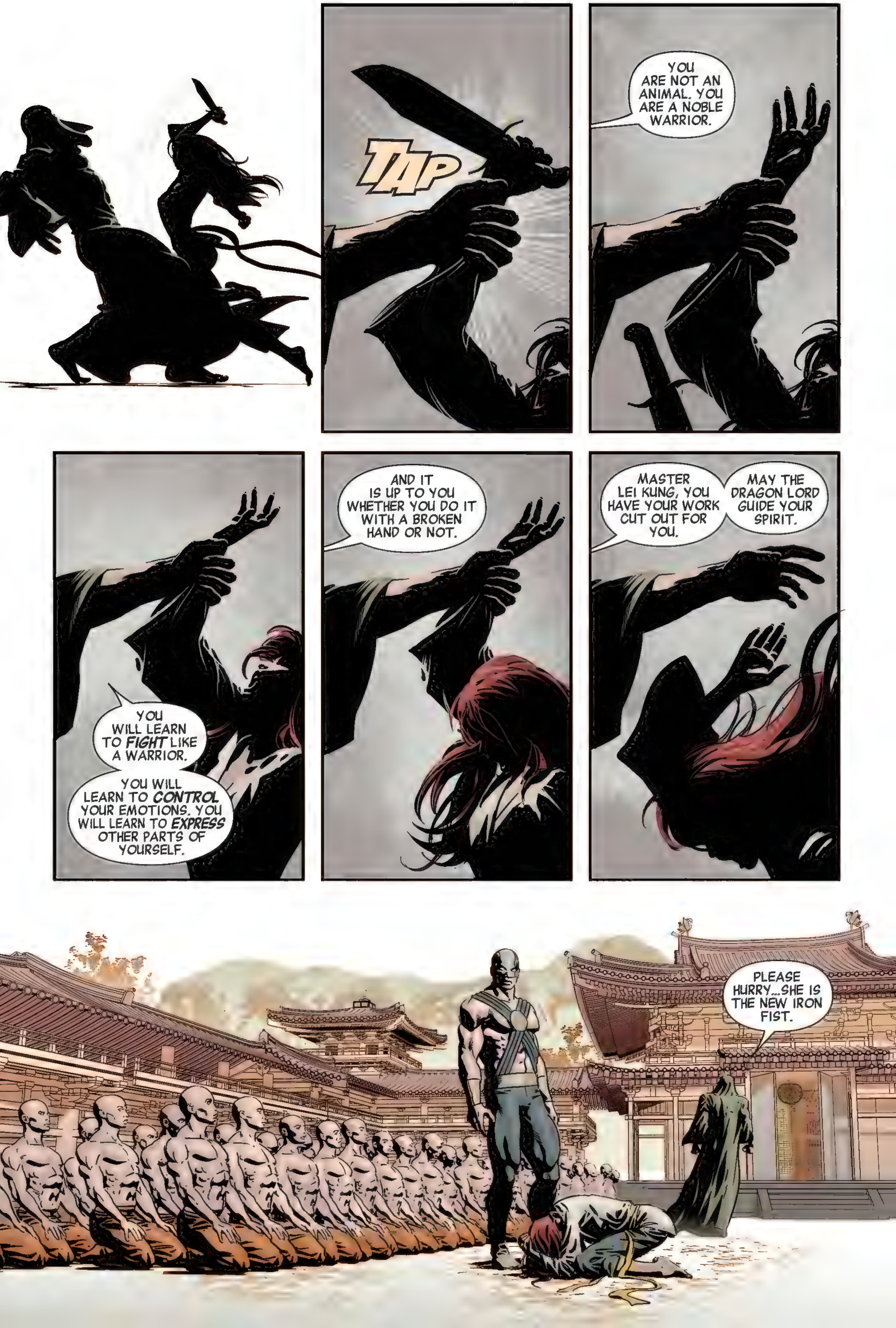
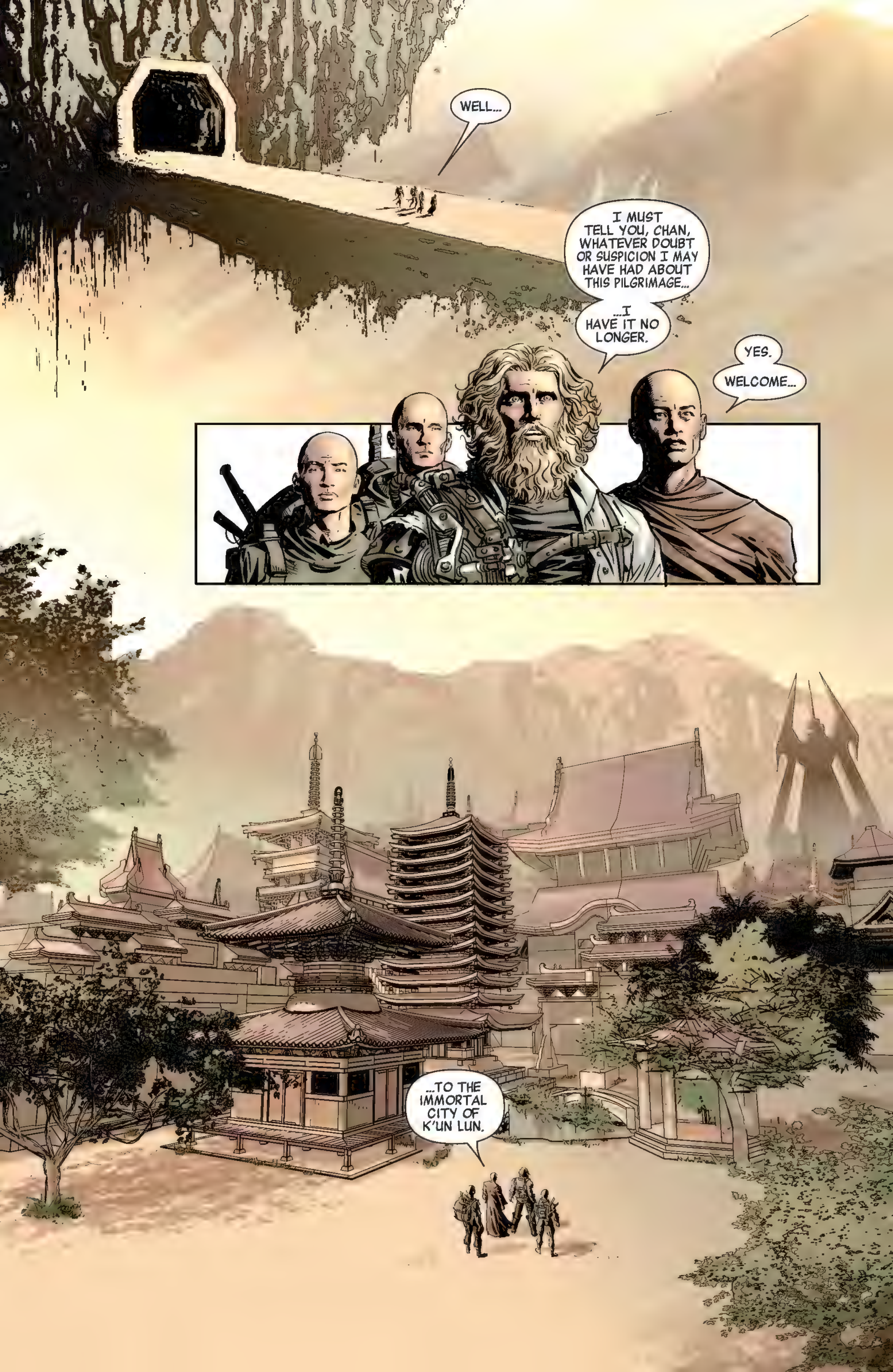

Years Ago.
MY NAME IS CHAN KONG-SANG.
I HAVE COME A GREAT DISTANCE TO SEE YOU.
SO I'VE BEEN TOLD.
WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?
I AM A MESSENGER.
I COME FROM A GREAT CITY THAT SITS IN THE SPACE BETWEEN SPACES OF TIBET.
THE IMMORTAL CITY OF K'UN LUN.
HAVE YOU HEARD OF IT?
NO.
ANOTHER HIDDEN CITY.
HIDDEN FROM THE SOCIETIES OF MEN. YES.
OUR MASTER, YU TI, HAD A POWERFUL VISION.
THIS IS A MAN OF THE HIGHEST LEARNING. THIS IS A MAN WHO HAS TOTAL CONTROL OVER HIS MIND AND BODY.
HIS VISION IS MORE THAN A DREAM. IT IS A PROPHECY.
DO YOU BELIEVE IN THE POWER OF PROPHECY?
I DO, ACTUALLY.
VERY MUCH SO.
MASTER YU TI HAS PROPHESIED THAT A BIRD OF FIRE IS COMING FROM THE SKY.
THE SPIRIT OF FIRE WILL BURN THIS WORLD AND EVERYTHING ON IT.
WHAT WOULD MASTER YU TI HAVE ME DO?
IN THE PROPHECY, THERE IS A WOMAN, A GIRL, WHO IS ABLE TO, AS HE SAYS, EMBODY THE FIRE, BATTLE IT, MAYBE CONTROL IT.
HAVE YOU FOUND THIS WOMAN?
THE MASTER THINKS SO...
BUT WE NEED TO PREPARE.
WE DON'T KNOW HOW MUCH TIME WE HAVE. WE DON'T KNOW WHERE OR WHEN THE BIRD OF FIRE WILL COME.
WOULD YOU COME BACK TO K'UN LUN WITH ME? WOULD YOU HELP US?
ME?

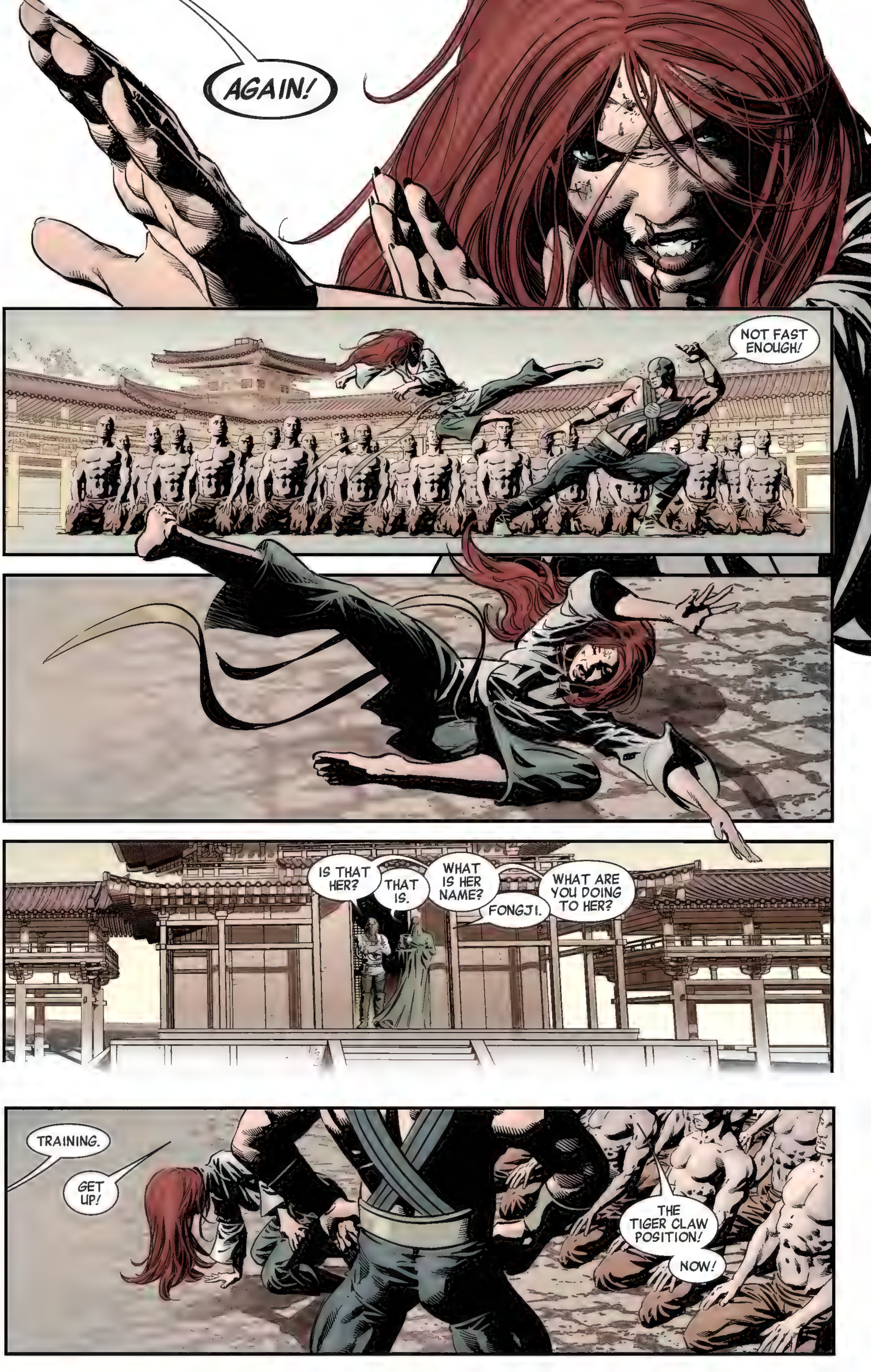

THE ENTIRE WORLD KNOWS OF LEONARDO DA VINCI.
IT IS THE MASTER'S BELIEF THAT OF EVERYONE ON EARTH, ONLY YOU HAVE THE KNOWLEDGE TO HELP US SEE THE PROPHECY THROUGH TO ITS NATURAL CONCLUSION.
WELL, HOW COULD I SAY NO TO THAT?

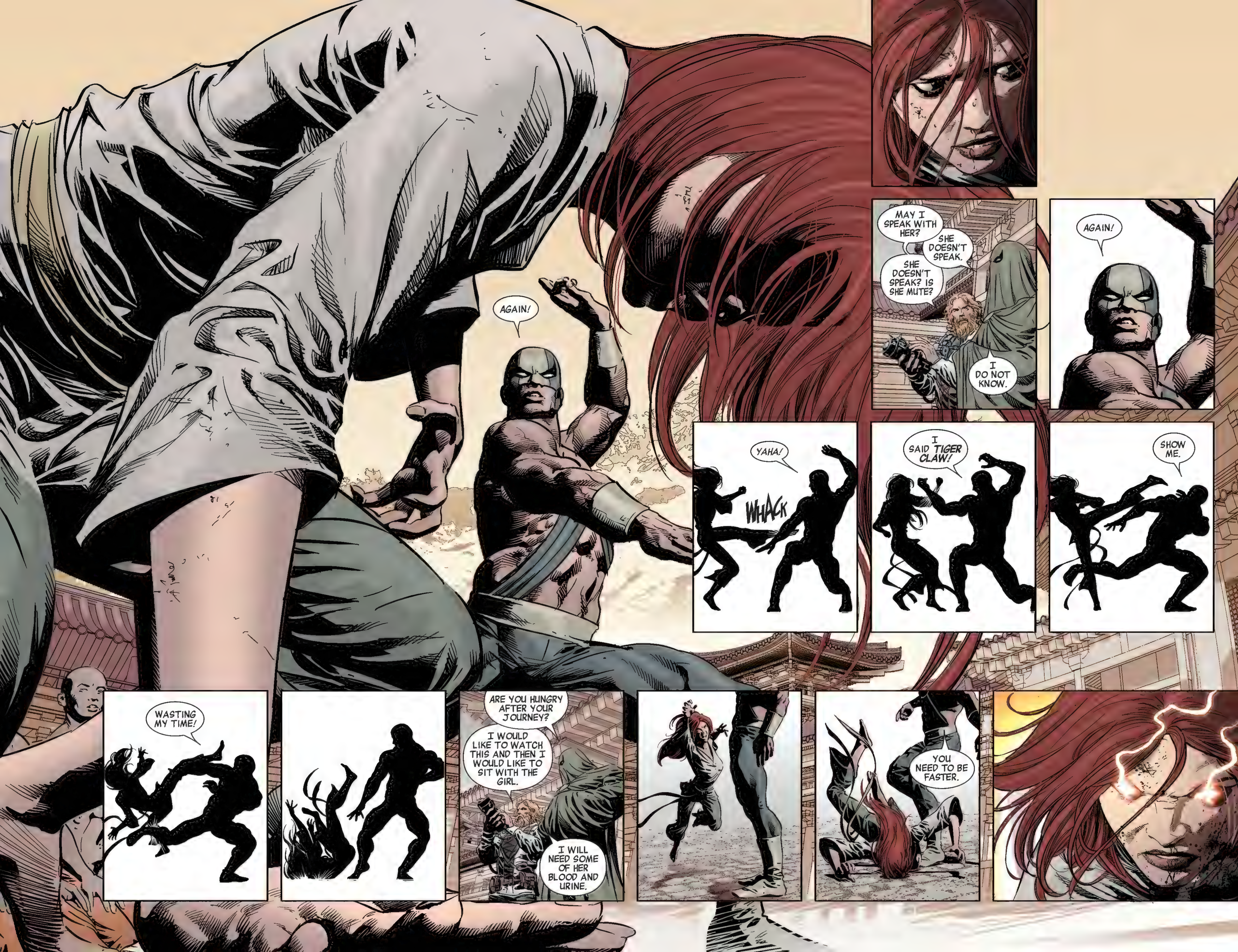

TEMPLE OF THE DRAGON OF K'UN LUN. MANY YEARS AGO.
WHY DO YOU NOT SPEAK?
MASTER YU TI IS SPEAKING TO YOU, PETULANT CHILD!
ATTACK ME.
YOU WILL NOT SPEAK, SO ACT.
YOU'RE ANGRY, THEN BE ANGRY.
ATTACK ME.
I GIVE YOU PERMISSION... JUST THIS ONCE.
WHAT DID I EXPECT, YOU HALF-BREED RUNT.
YOUR WHORE OF A MOTHER RUINED YOU BEFORE YOU EVER TOOK A BREATH.
SHE BEDDED A STRANGER FROM THE WESTERN WORLD THEN SOLD YOU TO ME FOR A DINNER.

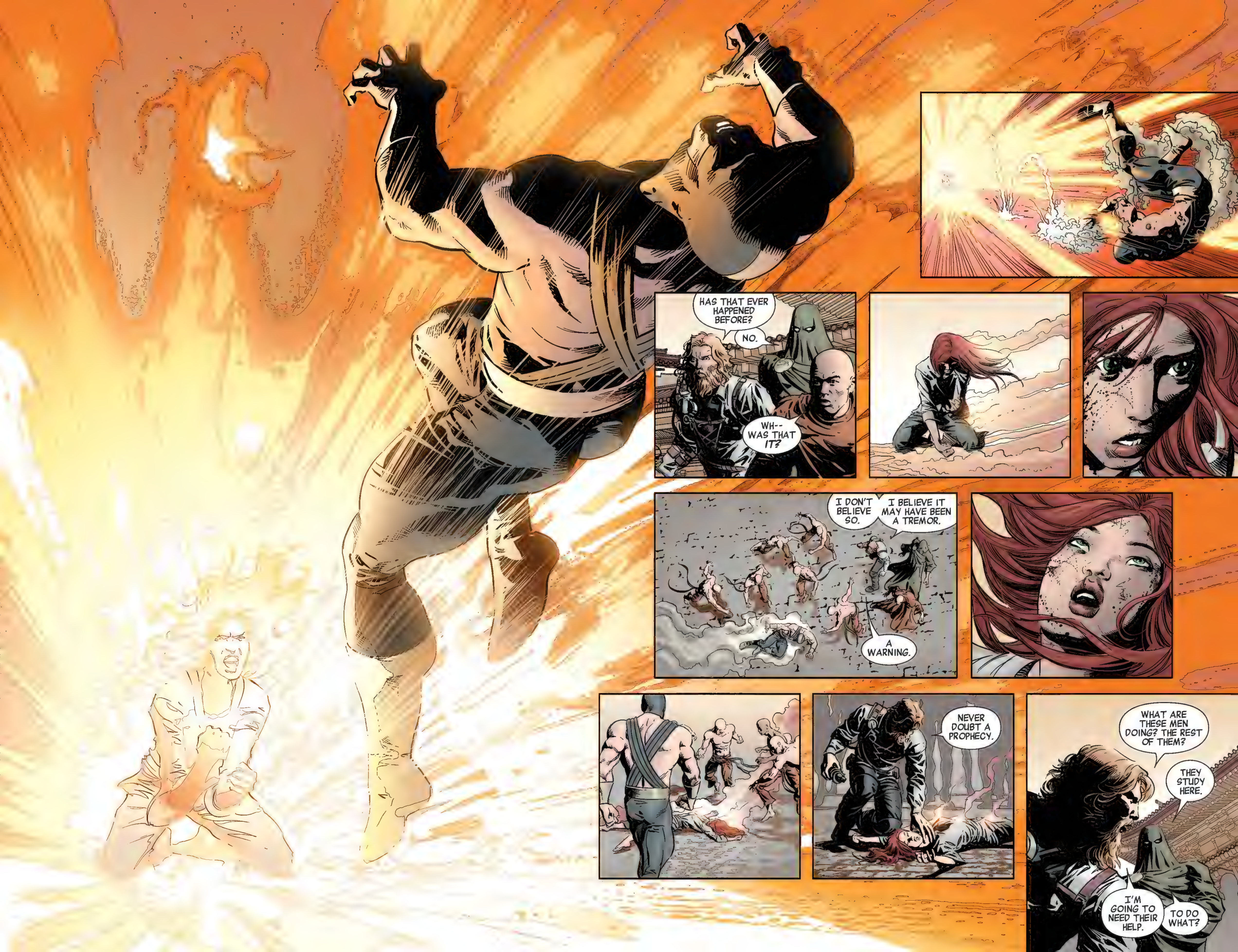

HA HA HA!
SILENCE!
SOMEONE ESCORT THIS MOP OUT OF THIS TEMPLE OF SPIRIT.
CRACK

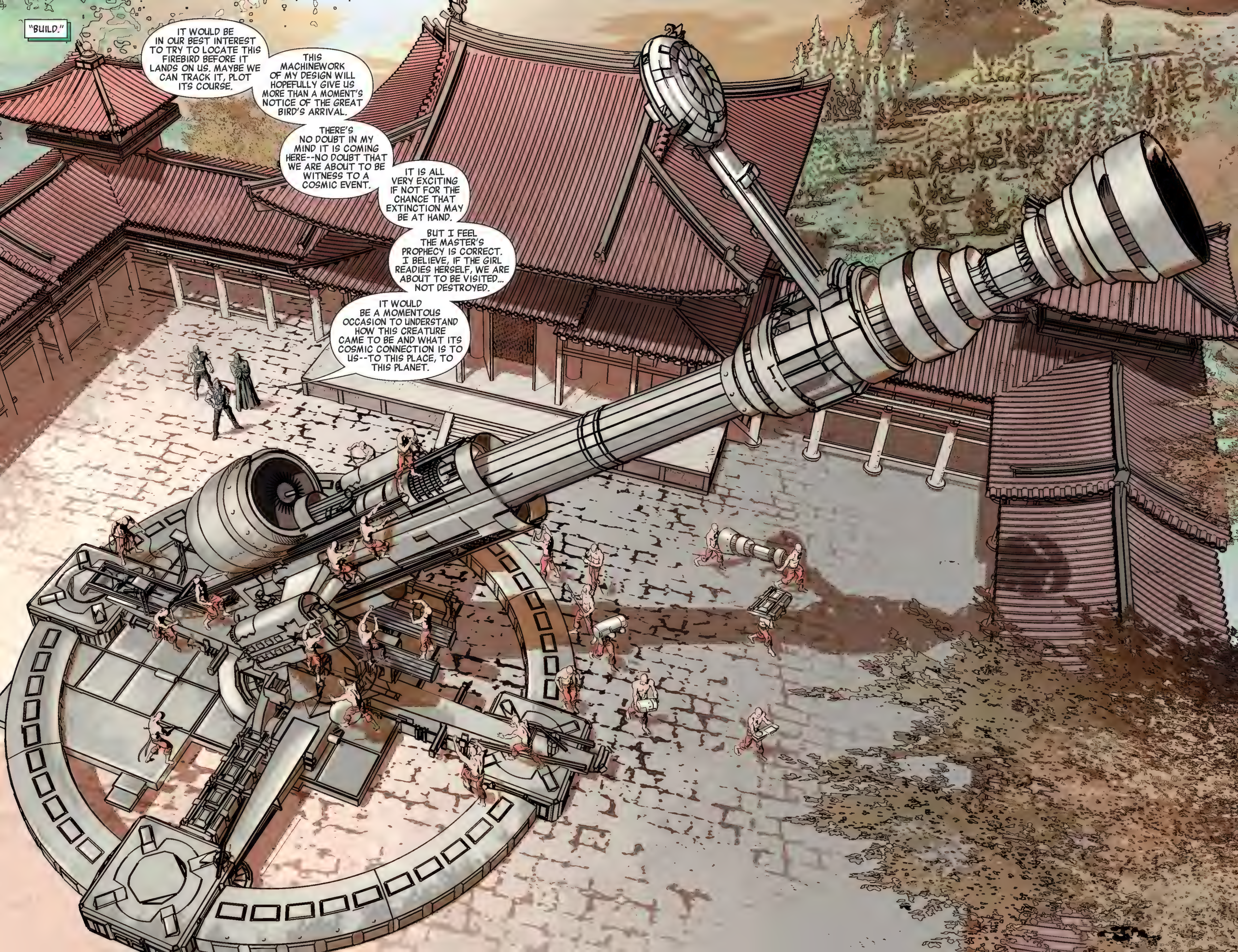

TAP
YOU ARE NOT AN ANIMAL. YOU ARE A NOBLE WARRIOR.
YOU WILL LEARN TO FIGHT LIKE A WARRIOR.
YOU WILL LEARN TO CONTROL YOUR EMOTIONS. YOU WILL LEARN TO EXPRESS OTHER PARTS OF YOURSELF.
AND IT IS UP TO YOU WHETHER YOU DO IT WITH A BROKEN HAND OR NOT.
MASTER LEI KUNG, YOU HAVE YOUR WORK CUT OUT FOR YOU.
MAY THE DRAGON LORD GUIDE YOUR SPIRIT.
PLEASE HURRY...SHE IS THE NEW IRON FIST.

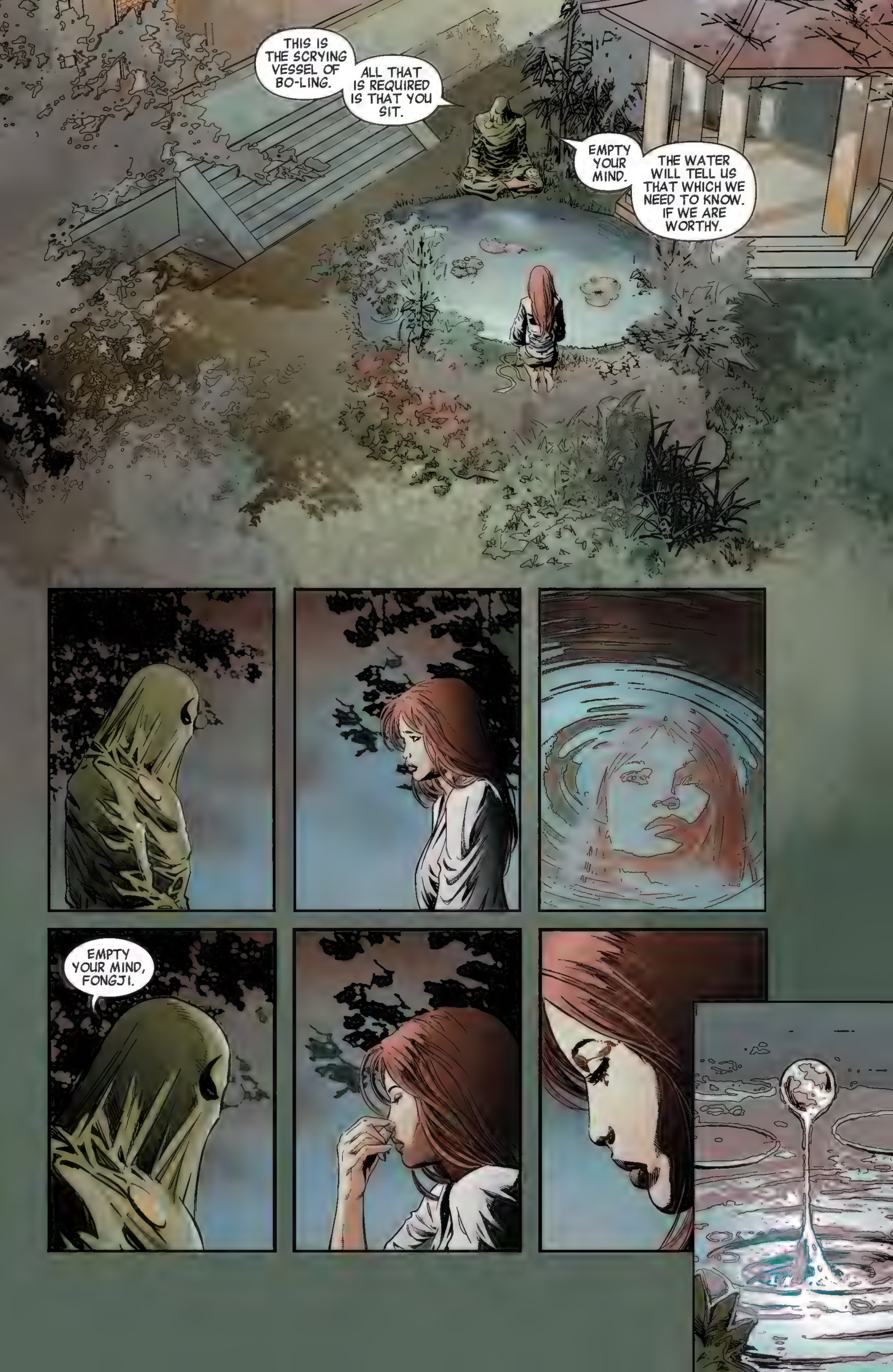

WELL...
I MUST TELL YOU, CHAN, WHATEVER DOUBT OR SUSPICION I MAY HAVE HAD ABOUT THIS PILGRIMAGE...
...I HAVE IT NO LONGER.
YES.
WELCOME...
...TO THE IMMORTAL CITY OF K'UN LUN.

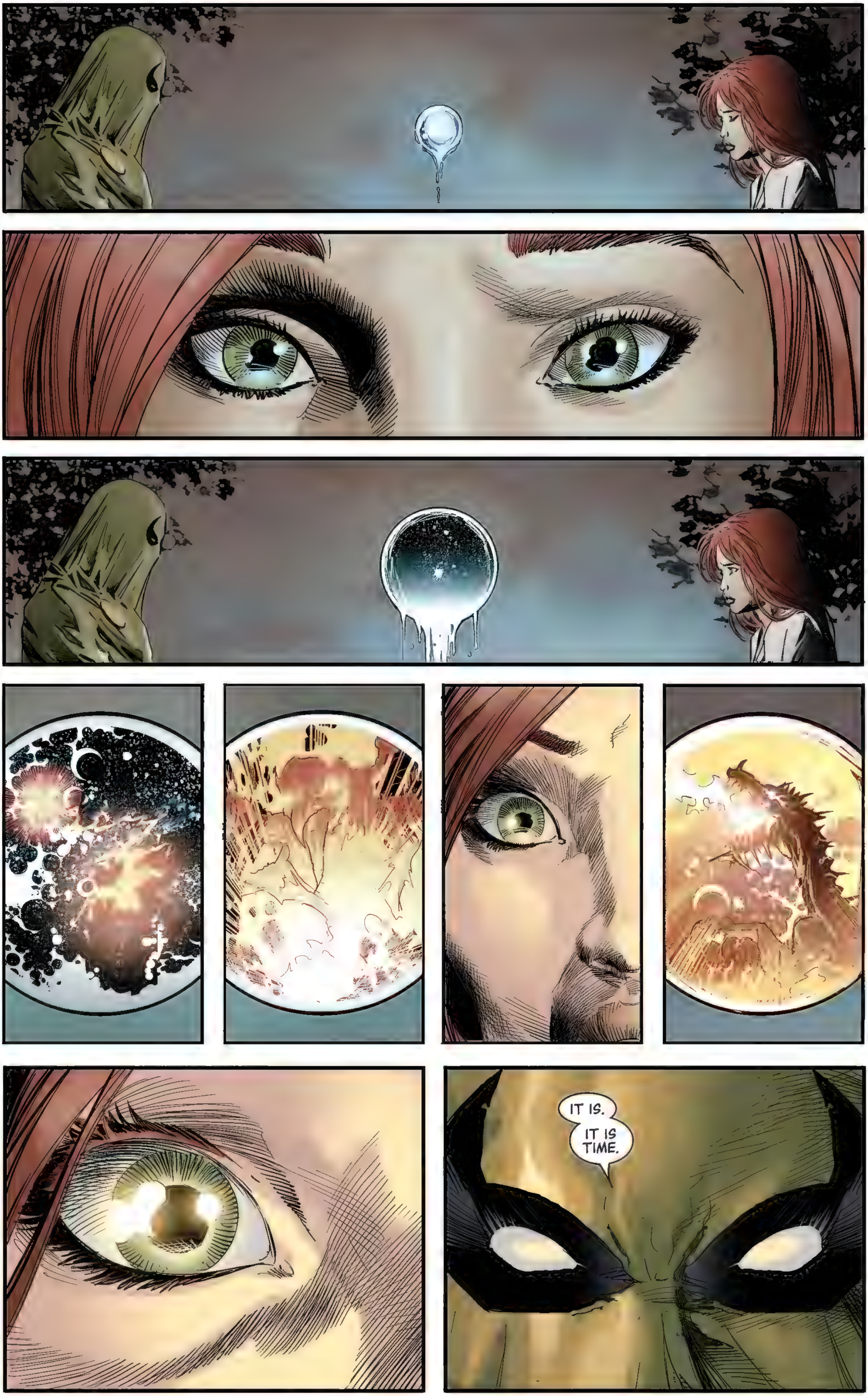

AGAIN!
NOT FAST ENOUGH!
IS THAT HER?
THAT IS.
WHAT IS HER NAME?
FONGJI.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO HER?
TRAINING.
GET UP!
THE TIGER CLAW POSITION!
NOW!

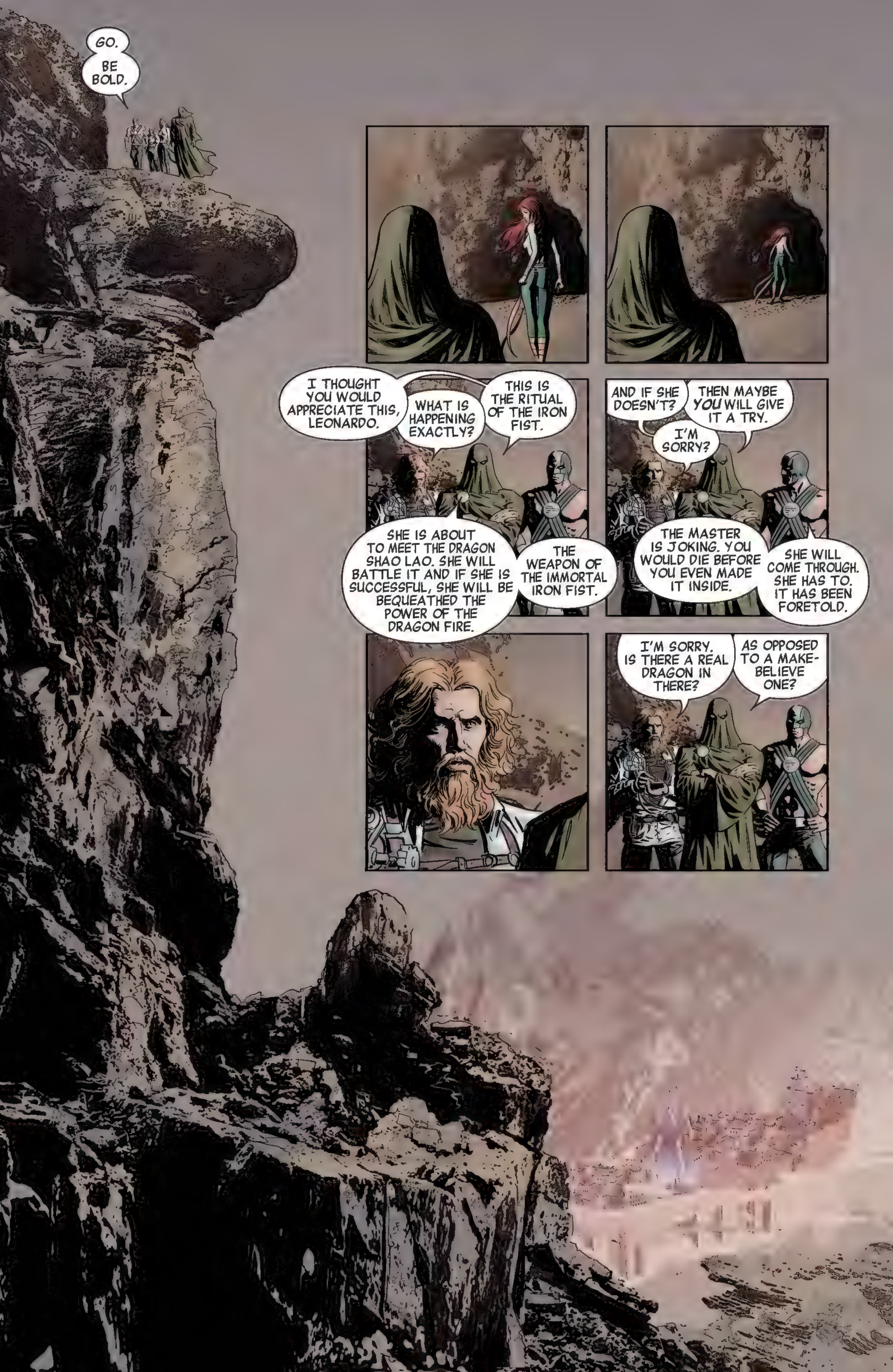

AGAIN!
MAY I SPEAK WITH HER?
SHE DOESN'T SPEAK.
SHE DOESN'T SPEAK? IS SHE MUTE?
I DO NOT KNOW.
AGAIN!
YAHA!
WHACK
I SAID TIGER CLAW!
SHOW ME.
WASTING MY TIME!
ARE YOU HUNGRY AFTER YOUR JOURNEY?
I WOULD LIKE TO WATCH THIS AND THEN I WOULD LIKE TO SIT WITH THE GIRL.
I WILL NEED SOME OF HER BLOOD AND URINE.
YOU NEED TO BE FASTER.

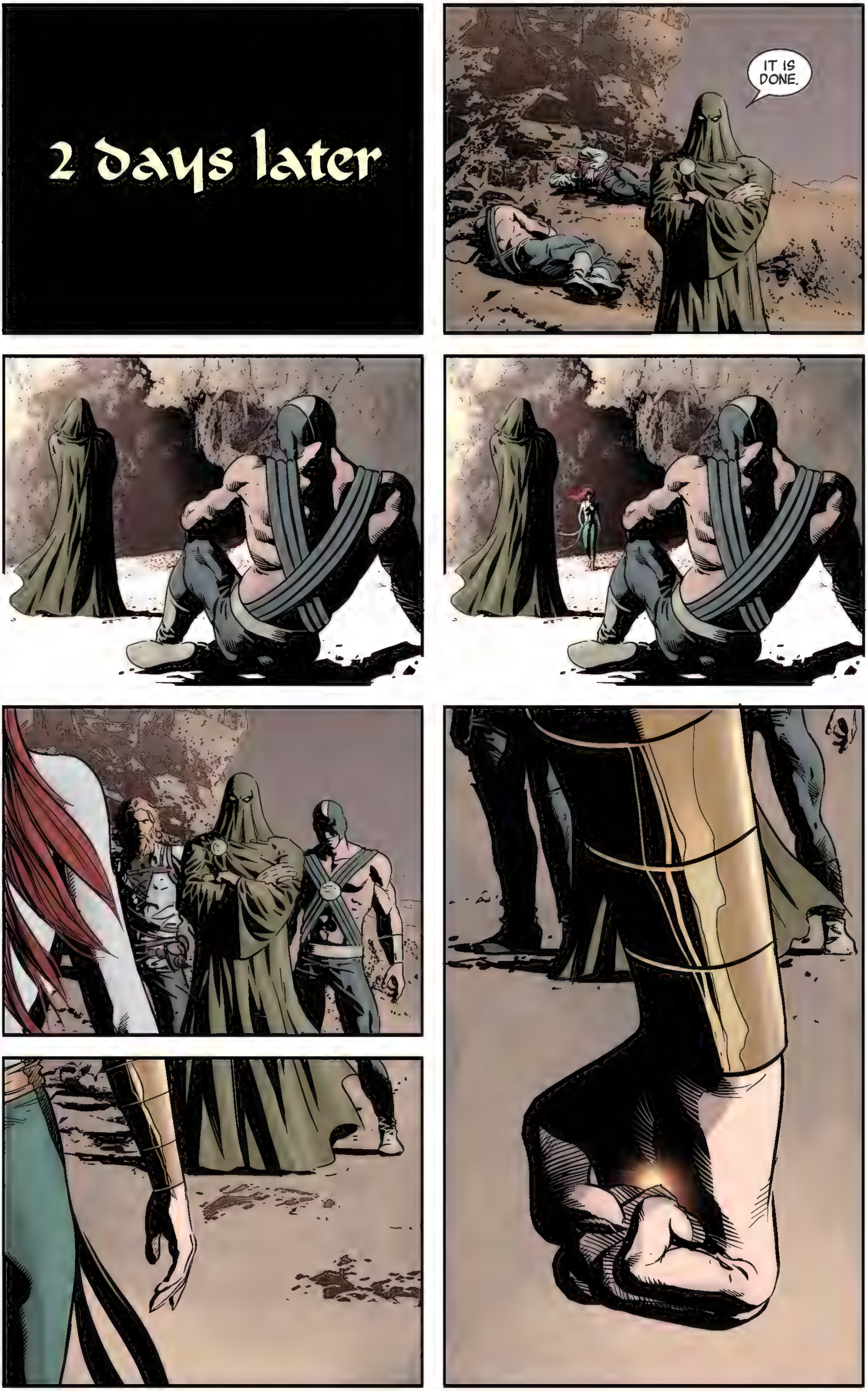

HAS THAT EVER HAPPENED BEFORE?
NO.
WH-- WAS THAT *IT?*
I DON'T BELIEVE SO.
I BELIEVE IT MAY HAVE BEEN A TREMOR.
A WARNING.
NEVER DOUBT A PROPHECY.
WHAT ARE THESE MEN DOING? THE REST OF THEM?
THEY STUDY HERE.
I'M GOING TO NEED THEIR HELP.
TO DO WHAT?


"BUILD."
IT WOULD BE IN OUR BEST INTEREST TO TRY TO LOCATE THIS FIREBIRD BEFORE IT LANDS ON US. MAYBE WE CAN TRACK IT, PLOT ITS COURSE.
THIS MACHINEWORK OF MY DESIGN WILL HOPEFULLY GIVE US MORE THAN A MOMENT'S NOTICE OF THE GREAT BIRD'S ARRIVAL.
THERE'S NO DOUBT IN MY MIND IT IS COMING HERE--NO DOUBT THAT WE ARE ABOUT TO BE WITNESS TO A COSMIC EVENT.
IT IS ALL VERY EXCITING IF NOT FOR THE CHANCE THAT EXTINCTION MAY BE AT HAND.
BUT I FEEL THE MASTER'S PROPHECY IS CORRECT. I BELIEVE, IF THE GIRL READIES HERSELF, WE ARE ABOUT TO BE VISITED... NOT DESTROYED.
IT WOULD BE A MOMENTOUS OCCASION TO UNDERSTAND HOW THIS CREATURE CAME TO BE AND WHAT ITS COSMIC CONNECTION IS TO US--TO THIS PLACE, TO THIS PLANET.

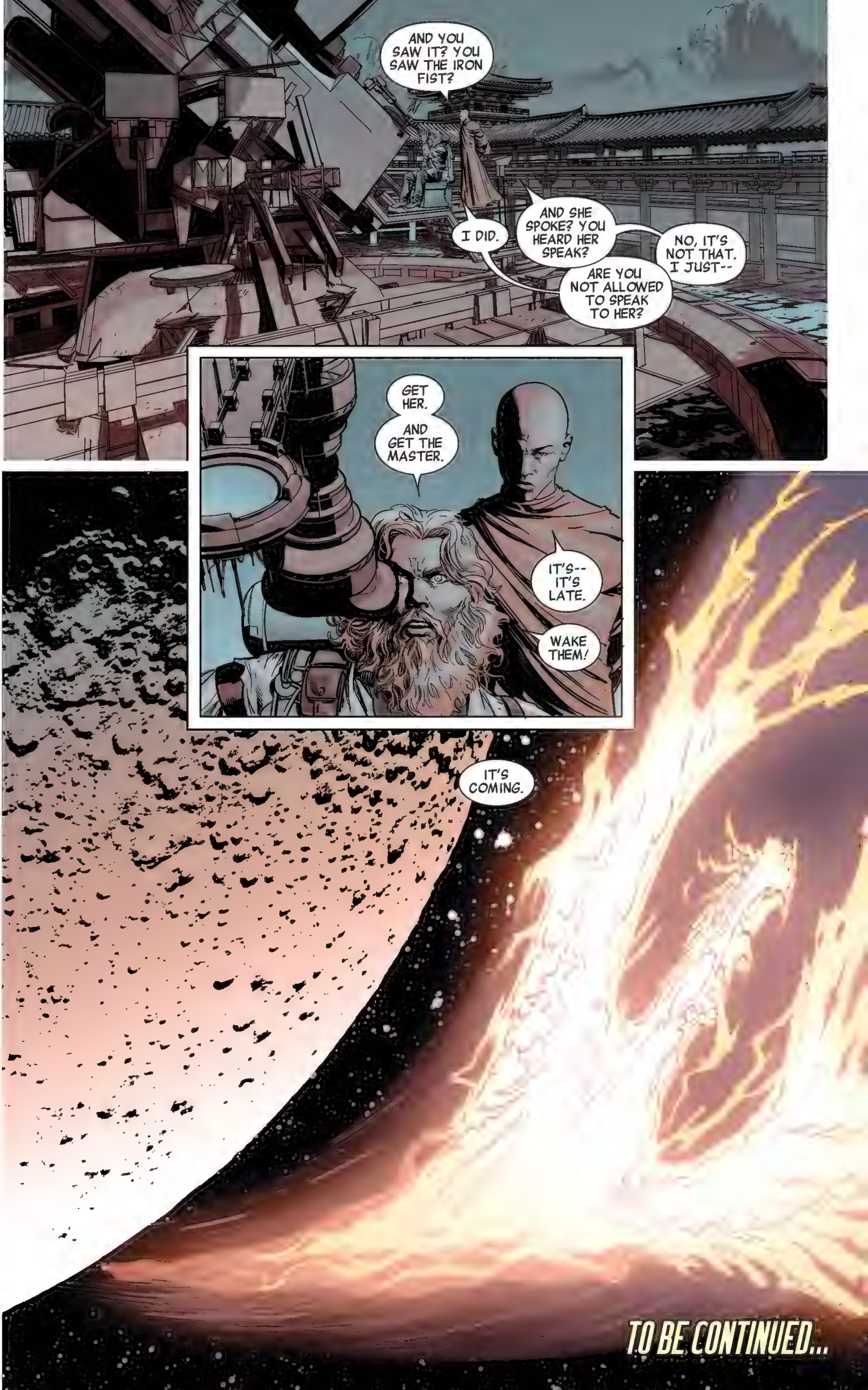

THIS IS THE SCRYING VESSEL OF BO-LING.
ALL THAT IS REQUIRED IS THAT YOU SIT.
EMPTY YOUR MIND.
THE WATER WILL TELL US THAT WHICH WE NEED TO KNOW. IF WE ARE WORTHY.
EMPTY YOUR MIND, FONGJI.


IT IS.
IT IS TIME.

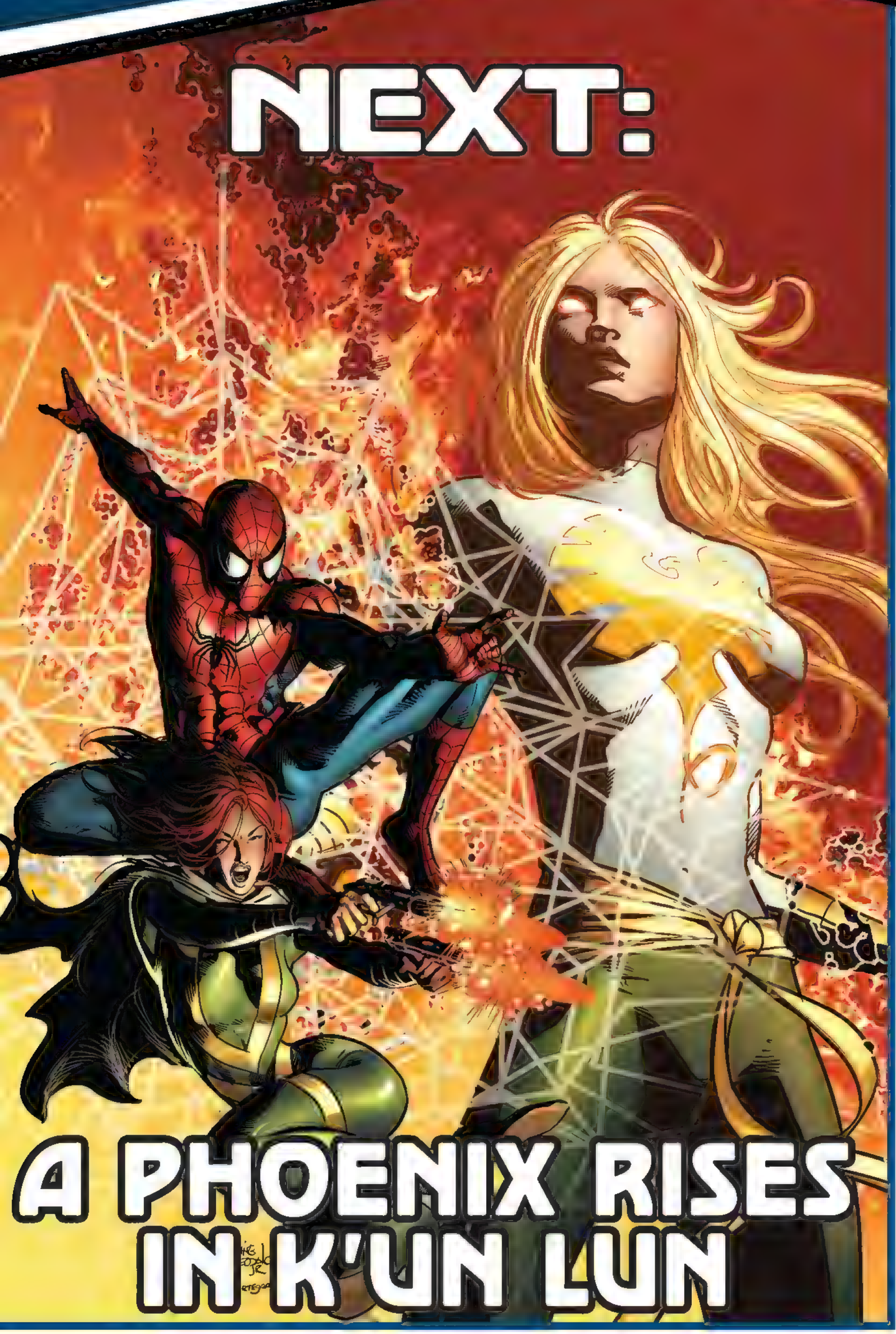

GO.
BE BOLD.
I THOUGHT YOU WOULD APPRECIATE THIS, LEONARDO.
WHAT IS HAPPENING EXACTLY?
THIS IS THE RITUAL OF THE IRON FIST.
SHE IS ABOUT TO MEET THE DRAGON SHAO LAO. SHE WILL BATTLE IT AND IF SHE IS SUCCESSFUL, SHE WILL BE BEQUEATHED THE POWER OF THE DRAGON FIRE.
THE WEAPON OF THE IMMORTAL IRON FIST.
AND IF SHE DOESN'T?
THEN MAYBE *YOU* WILL GIVE IT A TRY.
I'M SORRY?
THE MASTER IS JOKING. YOU WOULD DIE BEFORE YOU EVEN MADE IT INSIDE.
SHE WILL COME THROUGH. SHE HAS TO. IT HAS BEEN FORETOLD.
I'M SORRY. IS THERE A REAL DRAGON IN THERE?
AS OPPOSED TO A MAKE-BELIEVE ONE?


2 days later
IT IS DONE.

THANK YOU, MASTER.
THANK YOU.


AND YOU SAW IT? YOU SAW THE IRON FIST?
I DID.
AND SHE SPOKE? YOU HEARD HER SPEAK?
NO, IT'S NOT THAT. I JUST--
ARE YOU NOT ALLOWED TO SPEAK TO HER?
GET HER.
AND GET THE MASTER.
IT'S-- IT'S LATE.
WAKE THEM!
IT'S COMING.
TO BE CONTINUED...

A VS X


NEXT:
A PHOENIX RISES IN K'UN LUN

THE SEARCH FOR HOPE!

AVENGERS #26

LOYALTIES DIVIDED!

SECRET AVENGERS #27

CAPTAIN MARVEL REBORN?

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MARVEL

27

A VS X

THE NEW AVENGERS

BENDIS
DEODATO
BEREDO

Mike Deodato Jr.
+Martegracia

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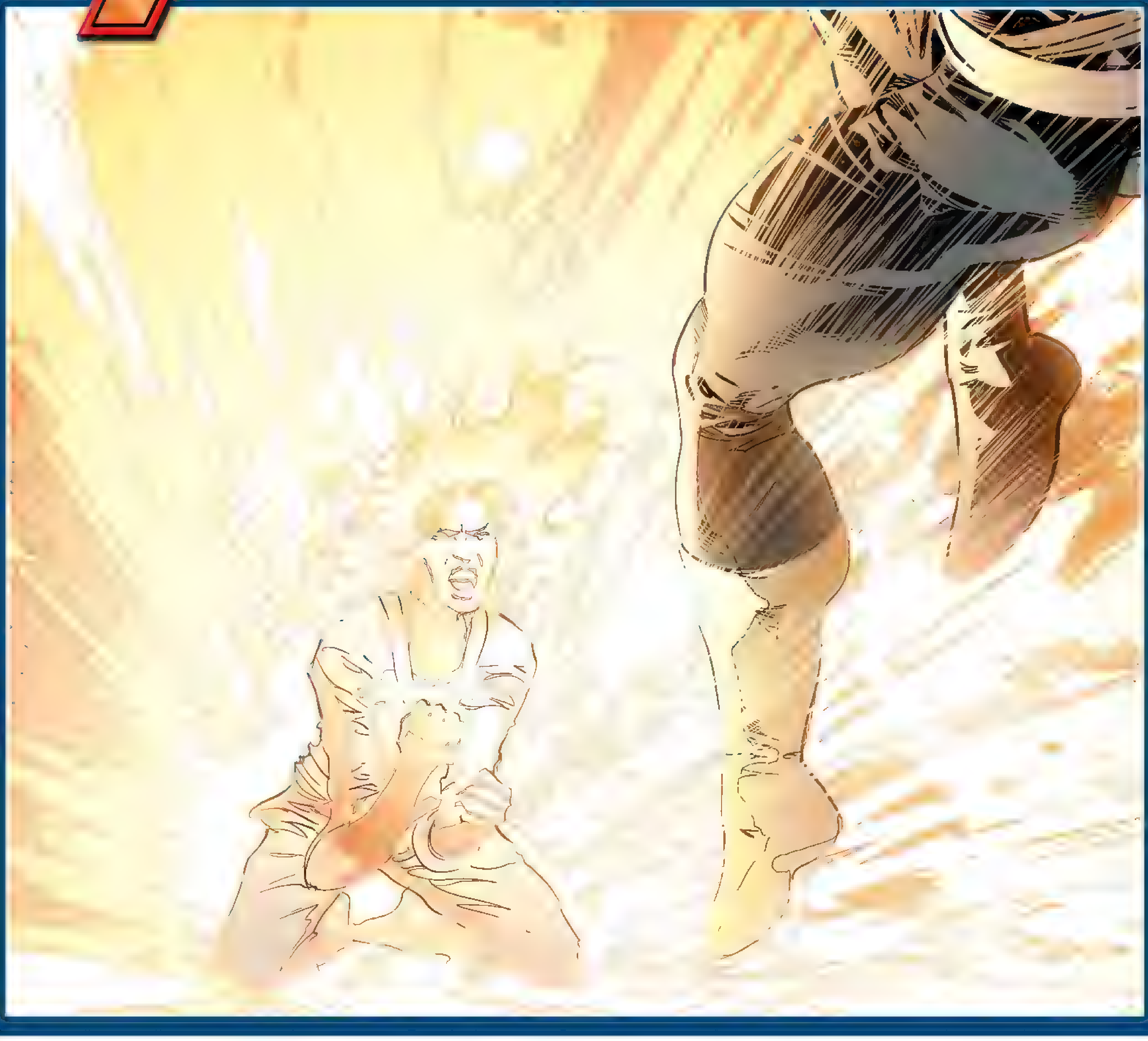
EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES, UNITED AGAINST A COMMON THREAT! ON THAT DAY THE AVENGERS WERE BORN, TO FIGHT FOES THAT NO SINGLE HERO COULD WITHSTAND!

NEW AVENGERS

IRON FIST

SPIDER-MAN



THE PHOENIX FORCE IS HEADED TOWARDS EARTH. THE AVENGERS BELIEVE THAT IT IS A DESTRUCTIVE FORCE THAT WILL LAY WASTE TO THE EARTH WHILE THE X-MEN BELIEVE IT IS A FORCE OF REBIRTH THAT COULD REIGNITE THE MUTANT RACE. BOTH BELIEVE IT WILL USE YOUNG MUTANT HOPE SUMMERS AS ITS AVATAR.

AS EARTH'S HEROES LOOK UNCERTAINLY TOWARDS THE FUTURE, THE ANSWERS TO THE FATE OF HOPE AND THE PHOENIX MAY LIE CENTURIES IN THE PAST, WHEN THE COSMIC FORCE CAME FOR A YOUNG, RED-HEADED GIRL UNDER THE TUTELAGE OF MASTER YU TI AND LEONARDO DA VINCI IN THE MYSTICAL CITY OF K'UN LUN.

BRIAN MICHAEL **BENDIS** WRITER
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RAIN **BEREDO** COLOR ART
VC'S JOE **CARAMAGNA** LETTERS & PRODUCTION
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K'un Lun.
Years and years ago.
WHAT DO I DO?
YOU WILL ENGAGE THE BIRD OF FIRE, FONGJI.
I DO NOT KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS.
YOU ARE THE CHOSEN DRAGON LORD.
THE IRON FIST.
THIS IS YOUR MOMENT.
WHAT DID I DO IN YOUR DREAM?
THE PROPHECY.
IN YOUR PROPHECY, WHAT DID I DO?
I HAD TWO PROPHECIES...
TWO?

"IN ONE YOU ENGAGED THE BIRD AND TOOK THE GIFT OF ITS POWER TO BECOME A BEING OF PURITY.
"YOU BECOME THE PHOENIX.
"IN THE OTHER YOU WERE CORRUPTED BY IT."
YOU USED ITS POWER TO DESTROY ME, THE THUNDERER AND THE ENTIRE CITY OF K'UN LUN.
YOU NEVER TOLD ME THERE WERE *TWO* PATHS.
THERE ARE *ALWAYS* TWO PATHS.
I'M SCARED, MASTER.
AS AM I.
WHAT DO I DO?
FOCUS.
SIGNOR DA VINCI?
I'D... LISTEN TO HIM.

WHAT-- WHAT HAPPENED?

I BELIEVE IT IS DONE.

HOW DO YOU FEEL?
TRANSFORMED.
YES.
YOU-- THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT YOU *LOOK* LIKE.
DO YOU HAVE WISDOM TO SHARE?
THE PHOENIX SPEAKS INSIDE ME.
WHAT DOES IT SAY?
DOES IT HAVE A MESSAGE FOR US?
I'M NOT SURE I UNDERSTAND IT.
IT THINKS OF ME AS JUST A VESSEL.
BUT I AM NOT.
I--I AM IN CONTROL.
YES?
WHAT DOES IT WANT YOU TO DO?
IT TELLS OF THE COSMOS.
OF OTHER WORLDS.
OF OTHER PEOPLES.
IT'S NOT JUST US HERE. THERE ARE PEOPLE EVERYWHERE. CREATURES. SO MANY.
IF ONLY YOU COULD SEE WHAT I SEE.
I WOULD GIVE ANYTHING TO DO THAT.
WHY YOU? WHY DID IT COME HERE? WHY DID IT PICK YOU? WHAT DOES IT WANT?

WHAT'S HAPPENING? WHAT HAPPENS NOW?
ARE YOU TO STAY OR TO LEAVE?
FONGJI?
Nn...
FONGJI?
WHAT ARE YOU FEELING?

I--
I HAVE CONTROL.
BUT I MUST LEAVE. I WILL LEAVE.
THIS WORLD ISN'T READY.
RE--READY FOR WHAT?
THANK YOU, MASTER. THANK YOU FOR EVERYTHING.
I WISH YOU'D STAY. THERE IS MUCH TO STUDY HERE.
WILL YOU COME BACK?
THERE ARE TWO PATHS.
"AND THAT IS THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE IRON FIST AND THE PHOENIX."
"WAIT, WHAT--WHAT HAPPENED TO HER?"

HOPE...WHAT I AM TELLING YOU IS LITERALLY EVERYTHING I KNOW.
EVERYTHING.
DID-- DID SHE DIE?
K'un Lun. Right Now.
I'M ASSUMING EVENTUALLY.
WHAT I AM TELLING YOU HAPPENED HUNDREDS OF YEARS AGO.
OKAY, JUST--JUST TELL ME--WHY AM I HERE, MISTER RAND?
DANNY.
BECAUSE YOU'RE SAFE HERE, FOR THE MOMENT. AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY YOU CAN **TRAIN** HERE.
TRAIN TO BECOME **THE PHOENIX?!** THAT'S **ALL** I HAVE DONE APPARENTLY.
MY **ENTIRE** LIFE.
I TRAIN AND I TRAIN AND NOW IT'S HERE.
AND NOW THE PHOENIX IS ON EARTH AND I'M HERE **INSTEAD** OF THERE AND I'M NOT EVEN SURE WHAT I'M SUPPOSED TO DO WHEN I **GET** THERE.
EVERYONE ELSE ON THE PLANET IS FIGHTING MY FIGHT **FOR** ME.
IT'S NOT YOUR FIGHT.
THEN WHOSE FIGHT IS IT?
IF YOU KNEW THAT YOU'D BE READY.

THE PHOENIX IS ON EARTH.
AND YOU ARE HERE.
HOPE SUMMERS, THIS IS THE MASTER YU TI.
THE ONE-- THE GUY FROM THE STORY THAT TOOK PLACE HUNDREDS OF YEARS AGO?
IT IS A CEREMONIAL TITLE.
THE QUESTION IS NOT WHOSE FIGHT IT IS, THE QUESTION IS... WHY?
WELL WHOOPEE FOR YOU! OKAY, GREAT, SO TELL ME: WHY AM I HERE?
THE PHOENIX IS *ON EARTH!* WHY AM I *HERE?!*
THE BOOK OF THE IRON FIST SAID THE GIRL WHO BECAME THE IRON FIST THAT MERGED WITH THE PHOENIX WAS MUTE.
HOW I *ENVY* THE MASTER YU TI WHO HAD *HER* INSTEAD OF YOU.
WAIT, SO, UH, I'M SUPPOSED TO BE IRON FIST NOW?
NO, YOU SEE, I AM AND THERE CAN ONLY BE ONE--
MAYBE.
MAYBE?
LET'S FIND OUT, SHALL WE?
FOLLOW ME, YOUNG ONE, AND TRY NOT TO TALK...AT ALL.

THIS IS THE SCRYING VESSEL OF BO-LING.
ALL THAT IS REQUIRED IS THAT YOU SIT.
EMPTY YOUR MIND.
THE WATER WILL TELL US MUCH.
HOW EXACTLY?
SIT. BE STILL.
ALL WILL BE REVEALED.
EMPTY YOUR MIND.
WAIT...IS THIS GOING TO TELL ME MY FUTURE?
JUST SETTLE YOURSELF, YOUNG ONE.
DOES THIS TELL HOW THIS ENDS? DO I BECOME THE PHOENIX? CAN I STOP ALL THIS CRAZY? AM I AN IRON FIST? CAN YOU MAKE ME ONE?

SORRY.

NO.
STOP IT.
THE SPIDER.
OH MY GOD.
WELL, THAT *WAS* INTERESTING.
IT--IT'S TRUE.
I *AM* THE PHOENIX.
IS THAT WHAT YOU TOOK AWAY FROM THAT?
WH-WHAT DID *YOU* TAKE AWAY?
YOU *DO* NEED TO BE TRAINED.
BY THE *SPIDER.*
SAY WHAT NOW?

TRAIN HER.
TEACH HER EVERYTHING YOU KNOW.
BUT--BUT AREN'T YOU THE KUNG FU MASTER OF ALL KUNG FU MASTERS?
QUITE.
SO SHOULDN'T *YOU* DO THE--?
NOW IT IS YOUR TURN.
SAY WHAT NOW?
HASN'T SHE ALREADY BEEN TRAINED BY CYCLOPS AND WOLVERINE AND--AND--AND--?
CABLE.
CABLE.
YES.
NOW... IT IS *YOUR* TURN.
BUT--BUT WE COULD HAVE DONE THAT BACK IN *NEW YORK.*
BUT YOU WOULDN'T HAVE KNOWN TO DO IT.
YES, BUT, SEE, WOLVERINE ACTUALLY *IS* A TEACHER--TO THE SHOCK OF ALL MANKIND--AND DANNY HERE, DANNY KNOWS ALL THE--
I WONDER IF YOU ARE TO TEACH HER SELF-LOATHING.

WELL, IT IS WHAT I HAVE MY DOCTORATE IN.
SO I GUESS YOU TWO SHOULD, UH, GET TO IT.
WHAT ARE YOU PEOPLE ON?!
WE'LL BE AT THE PORTAL.
UH, SO...
I'M NOT DRESSING LIKE YOU. I CAN TELL YOU THAT!
GOOD.
THERE'S ALREADY LIKE 8 SPIDER-LADIES.
OKAY, SO...
SO, UH, WHAT'S MAGNETO LIKE?
SO YOU'VE GOT NOTHING.
GIVE ME A BREAK. I JUST GOT THE GIG.
OKAY, WELL, YOU GO FIGURE THE "GIG" OUT AND I'LL BE OVER HERE FIGURING OUT WHAT EXACTLY I'VE BEEN PUT ON THIS EARTH TO DO, HOW I ENDED UP IN A MAGICAL KUNG FU CITY WHERE NO ONE TEACHES ANYONE KUNG FU, AND WHAT I'M SUPPOSED TO DO WHEN THE COSMIC POWERS OF A BIG FIREBIRD DUMP THEMSELVES RIGHT ON MY HEAD...
BECAUSE, RIGHT NOW, I'M PRETTY SURE THE WORLD'S GOING TO EXPLODE AND EVERYONE'S GOING TO BLAME ME AND I DIDN'T ASK FOR ANY OF THIS. NOT ONE DAMN BIT OF IT.
YEAH, WELL...

WITH GREAT POWER COMES GREAT RESPONSIBILITY.
WHAT?!
WITH GREAT *POWER* COMES GREAT *RESPONSIBILITY.*
WHAT THE HELL AM I SUPPOSED TO DO WITH *THAT?*
IT'S SOMETHING MY UNCLE USED TO SAY TO ME.
YOUR UNCLE.
THE MAN WHO RAISED ME, YES.
HE'D SAY THIS, WHAT? OVER BREAKFAST?
SOMETIMES.
AND THIS WAS BEFORE I GOT BIT BY THE SPIDER THAT DUMPED *ITS* SPIDER-POWERS ALL OVER *MY* HEAD AND EVERYONE STARTED BLAMING *ME* FOR EVERY BAD THING THAT EVER HAPPENED TO NEW YORK CITY.
SO *YEAH...*
THE THING IS, WHEN HE SAID IT, I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT THE HELL HE WAS *TALKING* ABOUT AND I DIDN'T *FIGURE OUT* WHAT HE WAS TALKING ABOUT UNTIL IT WAS TOO LATE.
UNTIL SOME IDIOT WITH A GUN SHOT AND KILLED HIM.
AN IDIOT WHO I COULD HAVE, MAYBE, DEFINITELY, STOPPED IF I WASN'T SO BUSY WORRYING ABOUT MYSELF AND, INSTEAD, REALLY LISTENING TO THE WORDS HE WAS SAYING.
WITH GREAT POWER THERE MUST COME GREAT RESPONSIBILITY.
AND EVER SINCE THAT DAY... I'VE BEEN TRYING TO LIVE A LIFE THAT RESEMBLES WHAT THOSE WORDS MEAN.
AND I CAN TELL YOU THEY MEAN *EVERYTHING.*
I CAN ALSO TELL YOU *THIS...*

YOU CAN LIVE EVERY DAY OF YOUR LIFE TRYING TO THINK OF SOMETHING *MORE* PROFOUND OR MORE *ON THE NOSE...*
BUT FOR US, FOR PEOPLE LIKE US, WHO SUDDENLY FIND THEMSELVES LOOKING OUT AT A CRAZY WORLD AND NOT KNOWING WHAT THE HELL WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE DOING IN IT...
I CAN TELL YOU THAT JUST REMEMBERING THAT WITH GREAT POWER COMES GREAT RESPONSIBILITY...
CAN *COMPLETELY* DEFINE YOU.
HEY, HO, HEY WAIT.
WHAT *ELSE* DID HE SAY?
DID HE SAY ANYTHING ELSE?
SHOULD I GET A NEW COSTUME?
MAYBE I SHOULD.
WHERE DO YOU GET YOURS?

TO BE CONTINUED...

NEXT: BREAKOUT FROM THE X-BRIG

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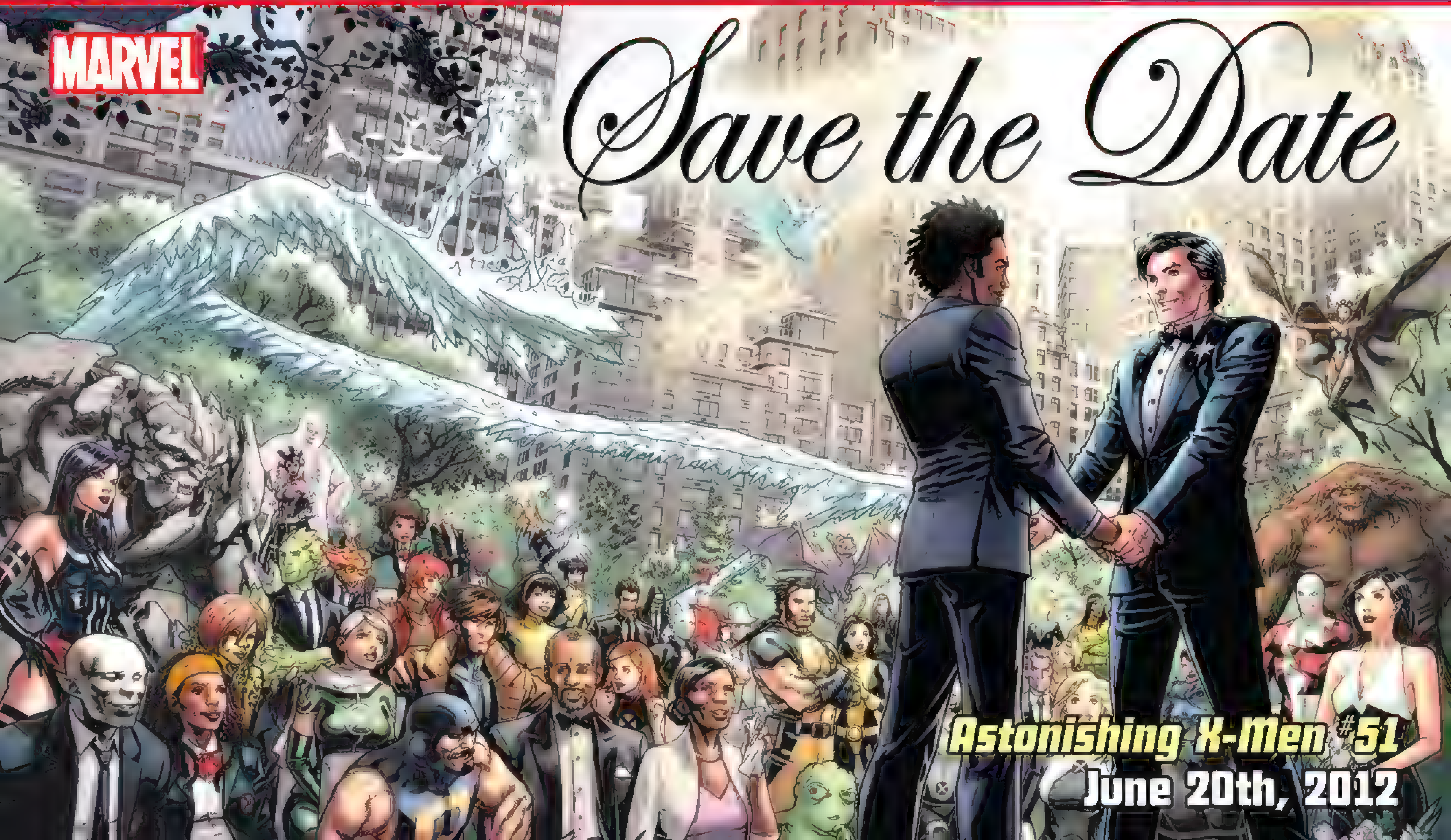
MARVEL
Save the Date
Astonishing X-Men #51
June 20th, 2012

MARVEL
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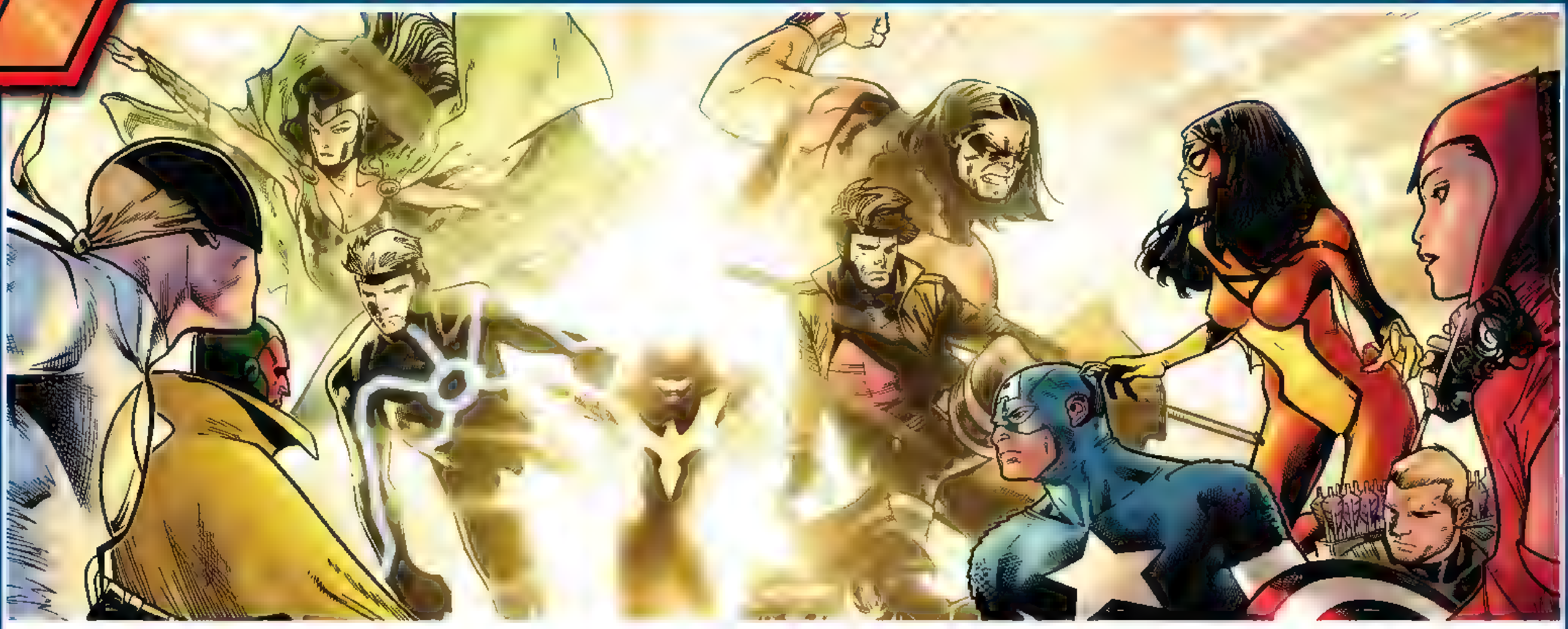
LUKE CAGE

SPIDER-WOMAN

HAWKEYE



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UTOPIA.
ISLAND HOME OF THE X-MEN.
THE X-BRIG.
LOWEST LEVEL OF UTOPIA.
SPIDER-WOMAN
CAPTURED.
HELD FOR TRIBUNAL.
YOU'RE NOT GOING TO EAT YOUR FOOD?

YOU'RE DRUGGING IT TO KEEP OUR POWERS DAMPENED.
NO, ACTUALLY.
THAT'S WHAT *I'M* FOR.
I'M KEEPING ALL YOUR MINDS FROM ACCESSING YOUR POWERS.
WHEN YOU WERE A LITTLE GIRL, PHOEBE, IS THIS WHAT YOU DREAMED OF DOING?

WAKE UP, CAGE.
DINNER.
LUKE CAGE
CAPTURED. HELD FOR TRIBUNAL.
C'MERE!
FOOM
HAAA!
WELL, THANKS A LOT, AVENGER.
@$@#$!
WAS THAT MY FOOD?
IT WAS.
CAN I HAVE ONE THAT YOU *DIDN'T* DROP ON THE FLOOR?
YOU SHOULD HAVE THOUGHT ABOUT THAT BEFORE YOU HULKED OUT ON ME.
COME ON, WARPATH.
CAN I BORROW YOUR PHONE? CAN I GET SOME SCORES?
CAN YOU FIND OUT WHO THE KNICKS ARE PLAYING?
CAN YOU TELL MY DAUGHTER I LOVE HER?

hawkeye
CAPTURED. HELD FOR TRIBUNAL.
DINNER, MISTER BARTON.
NO SILVERWARE?
NOT MY CALL.
THEY SAY YOU CAN TURN ANYTHING INTO A WEAPON, HAWKEYE.
NO UTENSILS. NO NOTHING.
NOT A SPOON?
USE YOUR FINGERS.
OWW! @#! @#!
WHAT?
OW!
THERE'S GLASS IN THE POTATOES!
THERE'S BROKEN GLASS IN THE POTATOES.
NO, THERE ISN'T.
I JUST SLICED MY FINGER STRAIGHT DOWN.
#@$%!
THAT'S-- THAT'S JUST NOT TRUE.
CAN I HAVE A BAND-AID OR GAUZE OR SOMETHING?!
IS THERE A HEALING MUTANT OUT THERE? #$@!
LET ME SEE.
OW!
NO ONE PUT GLASS IN YOUR--

GLUUNNK!
COFF!
AAAIIEE!
OPEN THE DOOR, MAGMA.
AAAIIEE!
OPEN THE DOOR AND YOU CAN HAVE IT BACK.
YOUR CALL.
BECAUSE I'VE *LITERALLY* GOT NOTHING TO LOSE.

HELP!
HE WON'T LET GO!
HE'S BREAKING MY ARM.
WE TOLD YOU: NO CONTACT.
I HAVE THIS-- HOLD ON!
AAGGH!
ENOUGH OUT OF YOU.
THERE.
AGH! I THINK HE BROKE MY ARM!
WE'LL TAKE YOU TO THE INFIRMARY.
I HOPE YOU STARVE, YOU HUMAN @#@$!
UNLESS ONE OF YOU HAS THE MUTANT POWER TO CREATE AN IN 'N OUT BURGER, YOU CAN ALL GO TO HELL.
REALLY COULD GO FOR AN IN 'N OUT BURGER.

OH, MAN, THANK YOU *SO* MUCH.
JUST HURRY.
I HAVE NEVER SMELLED THIS BAD IN MY LIFE.
AGGH...
WHAT'S GOING ON OUT THERE? IN THE REAL WORLD?
THEY JUST CAPTURED THOR.
AND THEY BROUGHT HIM HERE?
I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM.
BUT THE GOSSIP IS SUCH.
THOR... SO THAT'S PRETTY MUCH IT FOR US HUMANS.
IF THE PHOENIX FIVE CAN TAKE DOWN THOR, WHAT HOPE DO THE REST OF US HAVE?
YOU'LL SEE.
SCOTT SUMMERS HAS A VISION FOR ALL OF US.
FOR *ALL* OF US.

I KNOW YOU THINK HE DOES.
I KNOW *HE* THINKS HE DOES. BUT LADY, ALL YOU'RE GOING TO GET IS--
THE WHOLE WORLD WILL BE FREE.
THE WORLD WILL BE AS IT IS SUPPOSED TO.
THE WHOLE WORLD WILL BE AS BEAUTIFUL AS UTOPIA.
UNLESS YOU'RE DOWN HERE, WITH US.
YOU'LL SEE.
ONCE THE FIGHTING IS OVER... YOU'LL SEE.
CAN I ASK ANOTHER FAVOR?
CAN I HAVE PAPER AND A PEN? JUST A COUPLE OF PIECES.
I-I DON'T KNOW.
I JUST-- I WANT TO MAKE OUT A WILL.
AND I WANT TO WRITE MY MOM.
EMMA FROST TOLD ME SHE'S GOING TO EXECUTE ME, AND I KNOW THAT'S--
I LOST AND THAT'S THE COST.
I KNOW THAT.
I JUST WANT TO TELL MY MOM I LOVE HER AND I WANT TO GET, YOU KNOW, JUST GET MY AFFAIRS IN ORDER.

TAKE IT, HURRY.
OH MY GOD...THANK YOU SO MUCH.
CLANG
WHAT ARE YOU-- AGH!
SCREAM AND I'LL KILL YOU.
OPEN THE DOOR OR I'LL KILL YOU.
BUT-- BUT--I WAS NICE TO YOU!
NICE TO ME? I'M IN JAIL, YOU $#@%!
OPEN THE DOOR AND I'LL LET YOU LIVE.

BIZZKOCK
THANK YOU. I'M SORRY.
YOU *WERE* NICE.
HOW FAR DO YOU THINK YOU'LL GET?
CLANG
NOT FAR WITH YOU BLOCKING MY POWERS.
AH.
HOW-- HEY!
WHO LET YOU--?

ZZAAATTT
AAGGH!
HUUAAGH!
AAGHH!
CRACCK
WHACK
ZZAAATTTTT

FFUUMMPP
HELLO?
CLICK CLACK
HEY.
HEY.
NICE TRY, MUTANT.
WHAT?
IT'S ME!
YEAH, RIGHT.
I LIVED THROUGH THE KREE/SKRULL WAR AND THE SKRULL INVASION, SHAPE-SHIFTER.
IT'LL TAKE A LOT MORE THAN A MUTANT WITH A KILLER RACK AND A--
HEY, I KNOW HOW YOU GOT THAT THING ON YOUR BUTT!

YOU WANT ME TO SAY IT OUT LOUD?
OKAY... HEY, HONEY.
I WANT POINTS FOR TRYING TO RESCUE YOU.
I WAS JUST ABOUT TO COME RESCUE YOU.
UH-HUH. BUT I SOMEHOW GOT HERE FIRST--
BUT I HAD A MUCH MORE INVOLVED SITUATION--
STOP COMPETING WITH ME.
I THOUGHT YOU LIKED THAT.
THIS ISN'T A DATE.
HOW COME YOU SMELL GOOD? YOU ALWAYS SMELL GOOD.
OH, HEY, STOP.
HEY, BIG GUY!
YOU GOT A KEY?
NICE TO SEE YOU TOO.
I GOT IT.
HOW LONG IS THIS GOING TO TAKE?
SURE. *HOW* LONG EXACTLY?
GO STAND OVER THERE AND COUNT TO A THOUSAND.
ZZAKTTT

I LOOSENED IT.
YOU CAN GROW HAIR?
YEAH, 'COURSE.
I LOST *THAT* BET.
WE STILL GOT A LONG WAY TO GO TO GET OFF THIS ISLAND.
THOR'S HERE. WE GET THOR AND WE CAN GET OFF THIS ISLAND NO PROBLEM.
SLAP
THOR? HELL.
THAT DOESN'T SOUND LIKE CAP'S FIGHT'S GOING WELL.
AAAAHHHH
DAMN.

DON'T.
GO!
YOU'RE INSANE, CAGE.
HEY, COLOSSUS.
DO YOU MUTANTS EVER GET TIRED OF NOT THINKING FOR YOURSELF?
COME ON!
THE MAN SAID GO.
WE CAN'T JUST LEAVE HIM!

CRACCKKK
WE NEED THOR.
WE NEED A TIME MACHINE AND A HAMMER.
THOR GIVES US A FIGHTING CHANCE.
I'M WORKING ON IT!
FOOM
#$%@.
OH, HEY, CYCLOPS.
BARTON.

SIMULATION COMPLETE.

BUT- BUT WE...
WE ESCAPED.
YOU ARE IMPRISONED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF SCOTT SUMMERS.
NO, WE-- WE--
YOU NEVER LEFT YOUR CELL.
MMGONNASELL YOU FOR PARTS.
WHY? WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS TO US?
THIS IS YOUR PUNISHMENT.
I AM DANGER. THIS IS MY STATION.
YOU ARE TO LIVE IN MY VIRTUAL REALITIES UNTIL SUCH TIME AS PERMANENT ACCOMMODATIONS FOR YOU ARE COMPLETED.
YOU CAN'T MAKE US BELIEVE.
I SUPPLY THE ENVIRONMENT, YOU SUPPLY THE DESIRE TO ESCAPE.
THE ESCAPE THAT NEVER COMES.
JUST STOP.
JUST LET US SIT IN JAIL.
YOU SHOULD HAVE THOUGHT ABOUT THAT BEFORE YOU ATTACKED THE MUTANT RACE.
PROGRAM IS RESTARTING.
NO!

YOU'RE NOT GOING TO EAT YOUR FOOD, SPIDER-WOMAN?
NEXT ISSUE: THE ILLUMINATI RETURN!

NEXT: ILLUMINATI ASSEMBLE!

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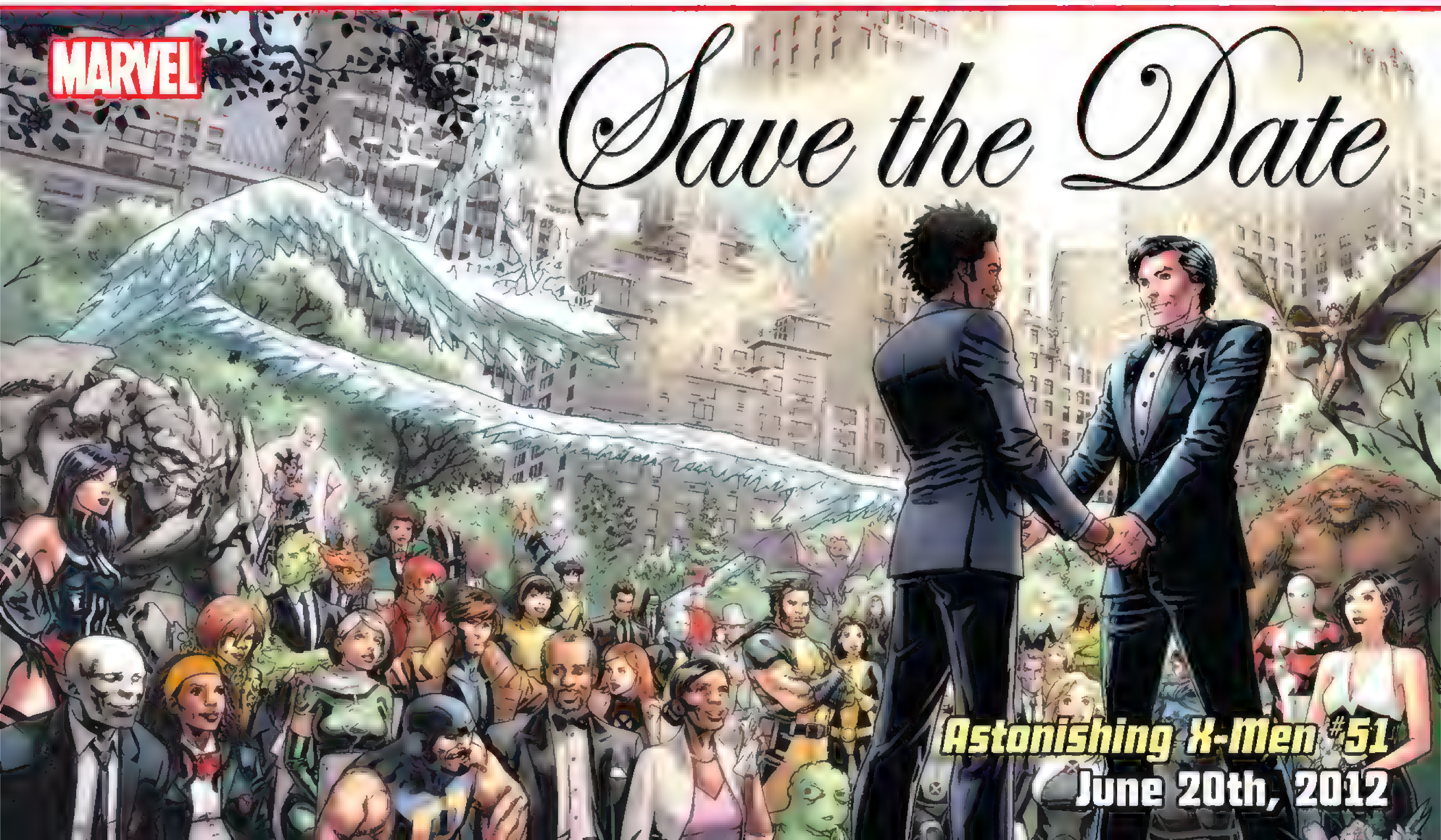
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CAPTAIN AMERICA

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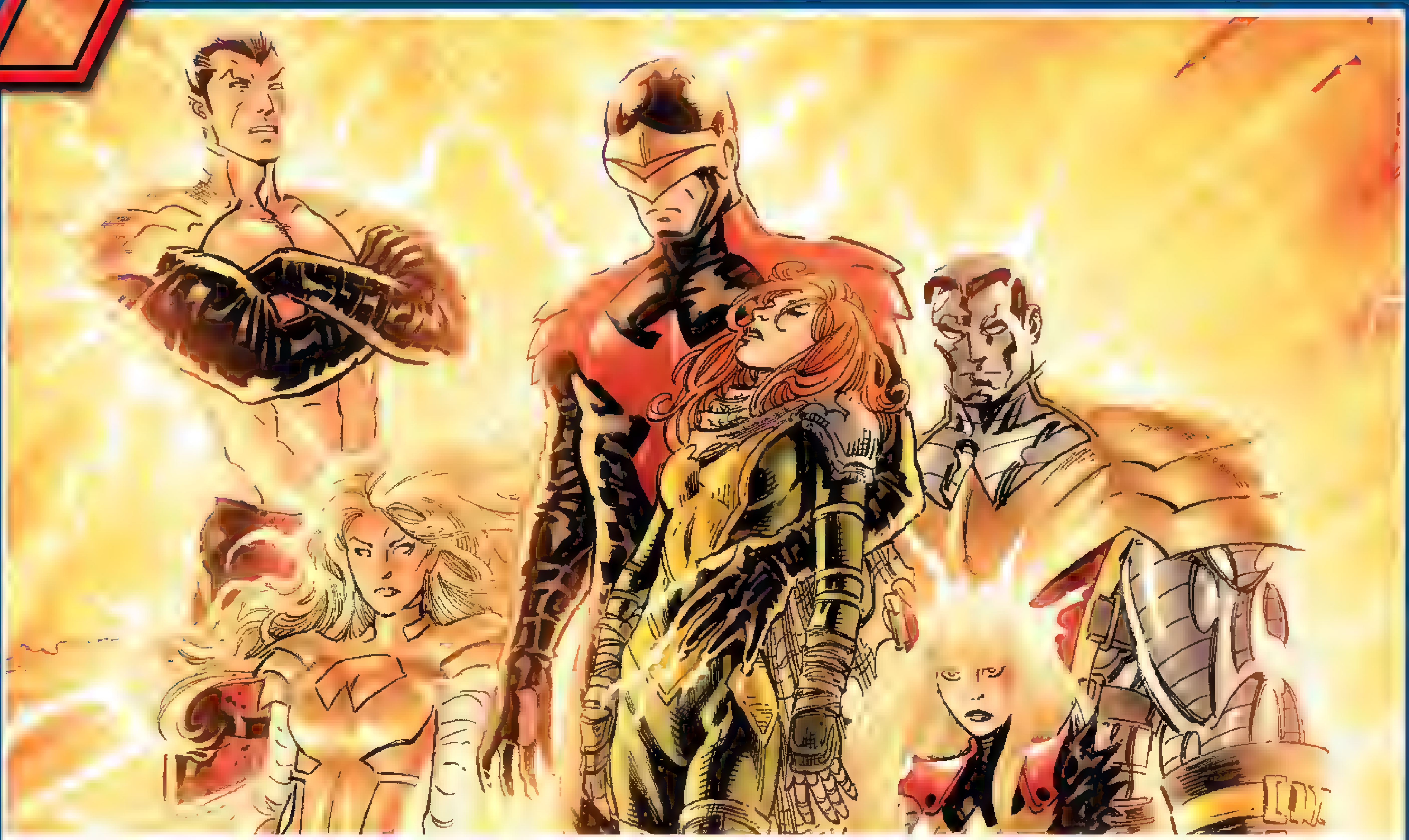
DR. STRANGE

MISTER FANTASTIC

PROFESSOR X

THE SUB-MARINER



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BATTLE OF ANZIO, JANUARY 22, 1944.
IMPERIUS REX!
THINK HE WAS TALKIN' ABOUT YOU, CAP!
REALLY? BECAUSE THE SKULL WAS LOOKING DIRECTLY AT YOU WHEN HE--
KILL THE COSTUMED ALLIED INTERLOPERS!
DO NOT LET THEM LEAVE THE BEACH ALIVE!

COVER ME, INVADERS!
WE TAKE OUT THIS BIG ROBOT'S BRAIN AND THE RED SKULL WILL HAVE NOTHING BUT A BIG HUNK OF JUNK TO SELL AT HIS PRISON CAMP FLEA MARKET!
PRISON CAMP FLEA MARKET?! DO PRISON CAMPS EVEN HAVE FLEA--?
YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN, TORCH!
DO NOT BE DISTRACTED BY THEIR CIRCUS!
KILL THEM ALL!
AND YOUR REWARDS WILL BE MANY!
KTANG
CAP IS DOWN!
DIE, AMERICAN!

SLAPAAASSH

NICE SAVE, NAMOR.
OF COURSE, CAPTAIN...
WE'RE BROTHERS.
FUNTIME, INC. A STARK ENTERPRISES SUBSIDIARY.
NOW.
WELL, THIS WAS A BALLSY MOVE.

WE DON'T CALL THESE MEETINGS ANYMORE.
YOU SHOULD NEVER HAVE CALLED THEM IN THE FIRST PLACE, TONY.
YOU'RE GOING TO START WITH ME ON THIS *AGAIN?*
SECRET MEETINGS TO DECIDE THE FATE OF THE WORLD?
YOU *JUST,* RIGHT NOW, CALLED A SECRET MEETING TO DECIDE THE FATE OF THE WORLD.
SO GET OFF YOUR HIGH HORSE.
HE WON'T COME.
HE WILL.
I KNOW HIM TOO.
HE WON'T.
I KNOW HIM.
DID YOU KNOW THAT ONE DAY HE WAS GOING TO JOIN UP WITH CYCLOPS AND USE A COSMIC FORCE OF DESTRUCTION TO MAKE THE WORLD OVER IN HIS IMAGE?
BECAUSE I DID.
GENTLEMEN...

TELEPORTATION SPELL OF THE NADIYAN BOOK OF FIRE PAGE 234.
DOCTOR STRANGE.
PLEASE TELL ME NOW... IS THERE A HIDDEN AGENDA TO THIS MEETING?
THERE'S A HIDDEN AGENDA TO *EVERY* MEETING IN THE WORLD.
BUT FAR AS I CAN TELL, THIS ONE IS AS ADVERTISED.
THIS IS ABOUT CAP AND NAMOR.
NAMOR WILL *NOT* COME HERE.
CAP THINKS HE WILL.
THEY USED TO FIGHT TOGETHER IN WORLD WAR TWO, DIDN'T YOU KNOW.
TONY...
CAP THINKS IF HE CAN JUST LOOK HIM IN THE EYE AND GIVE HIM THE OLD *"INVADERS BAND OF BROTHERS SECRET HANDSHAKE AND CHEST BUMP"* HE CAN GET NAMOR TO BACK OFF AND MAYBE GET CYCLOPS TO SOBER UP AND END ALL OF THIS.
WELL, IT'S WORTH A TRY.
THANK YOU.
BUT HE'S NOT COMING.
SOOTHING SPELL OF AGAMOTTO. SCROLLS OF AGAMOTTO.
HE MIGHT.
NOTHING WOULD SURPRISE ME ANYMORE.

NOTHING AT ALL.
EXCUSE ME?
XAVIER.
WHAT DID YOU *DO* TO THOSE KIDS?
ALL I KNOW IS--THEY GO TO YOUR SCHOOL AND THEY ALL TURN NUTS.
THAT'S NOT FAIR.
TONY...
I'M SORRY, I'M SORRY.
IT WAS A-A JOKE.
A *BAD* JOKE.
I'M TIRED.
I WAS JOKING.
YOU WERE NOT.
I *CAN* READ YOUR MIND.
YOU THINK THIS IS PARTLY MY FAULT.
AND MAYBE IT IS.
BUT SCOTT SUMMERS IS A GROWN MAN.
AND HE IS HIS *OWN* MAN.
I KNOW.
THIS IS THE OPPOSITE OF WHAT I TAUGHT HIM.
SO WHY DON'T YOU GO TALK TO HIM?
I HAVE.
WHY DON'T YOU SWITCH OFF HIS BRAIN AND LET US GET BACK TO THE DOCTOR DOOMS OF THE WORLD?
WHY DON'T *YOU* USE ONE OF THE INFINITY GEMS ON HIM?
YOU HAVE ONE.
WE ALL DO.
THAT'S NOT ON THE TABLE, CHARLES.
BUT IT IS.
EACH OF YOU ARE THINKING IT.
WHY *DON'T* WE USE THE GEMS TO MAKE THE PHOENIX DISAPPEAR BEFORE ANYONE ELSE GETS--
BECAUSE IF WE CROSS THAT LINE, WE'RE PRETTY MUCH DONE FOR AS A SPECIES.

DOCTOR RICHARDS.
DOCTOR STRANGE.
YOU GUYS *LOVE* CALLING YOURSELF DOCTOR.
I HAVE *THREE* DOCTORATES, YOU DON'T SEE *ME*--
DOCTOR STARK.
THANK YOU.
AND JUST SO WE'RE CLEAR...
WE DO NOT *TOUCH* THE INFINITY GEMS.
WE DO NOT USE ONE UNCONTROLLABLE COSMIC FORCE TO FIGHT ANOTHER.
NO ONE IS EVEN *HINTING* AT IT.
YES.
DOES EVERYONE KNOW THAT THEIRS IS SAFE?
YES.
MINE'S IN THE SAFE DEPOSIT BOX IN A WELLS FARGO FRANCHISE IN PORTLAND, OREGON.
NOT KIDDING.
HAVE WE HEARD FROM NAMOR?
NO.
AND WE WON'T.
HE MIGHT.
WE'LL SEE.
I WAS SURPRISED HE EVER GOT TOGETHER WITH US IN THE FIRST PLACE.
SEE, HE *CAN* SURPRISE YOU.
SO CAN A BURRITO.

WHAT DOES THAT EVEN *MEAN?*
IT MEANS I HAD A BURRITO LAST NIGHT AND IT'S SURPRISING ME *NOW.*
LISTEN, THEY'RE NOT ALL WINNERS...
YOU TALKED TO SUMMERS?
WHAT DID HE SAY?
I'M NOT MAKING FUN.
HONESTLY, WHAT DID HE SAY?
IS THERE ANYTHING THERE WE CAN WORK WITH?
STARK, I SPENT THE ENTIRETY OF MY LIFE TEACHING MUTANTS TO LOVE AND PROTECT EVERYTHING AND EVERYONE.
BECAUSE BEYOND IT BEING THE RIGHT THING TO DO...IT WAS THE *ONLY* WAY MUTANTS WOULD *EVER* BE SEEN AS EQUALS.
SCOTT SUMMERS WAS MY FIRST STUDENT AND THE ONE I WAS ALWAYS THE MOST PROUD OF.
SO EVERY MINUTE THAT THIS PHOENIX MAKES ME WATCH THE PEOPLE I TRULY LOVE USE AND ABUSE EACH OTHER IN THE NAME OF EVERYTHING I DESPISE...!

I'M SORRY.
NO...I'M SORRY.
NO ONE'S BLAMING YOU, PROFESSOR.
YOU ALL ARE.
I CAN... READ YOUR MINDS.
YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO.
WELL, I AM.
AND YOU DO BLAME ME.
I BLAME MYSELF.
I DEDICATED MY LIFE TO THESE CHILDREN AND IT'S ALL GONE TO HELL.
I AM HAVING A HARD TIME NOT SEEING THAT MY ENTIRE LIFE WAS IN VAIN.
SO DAMN YOU ALL FOR BLAMING ME.
CHARLES.
I'M PREPARED TO END THIS, YOU KNOW.
I'M PREPARED TO STOP SCOTT, NO MATTER WHAT THE COST.
BUT HE'S MY SON.
I-I-I KEEP WAITING FOR HIM TO SNAP OUT OF IT.
TO REMEMBER WHAT I'VE TAUGHT HIM!
INSTEAD, I GET A ROOM FULL OF YOU--
YOU ALL WITH ALL YOUR DEMONS... BLAMING ME.
CHARLES!
I UNDERSTAND HIM.
IF THIS WAS ONE OF MY FAMILY, IT WOULD KILL ME...
WHERE ARE YOU IN ALL THIS?

PLAYING CATCH-UP. A LITTLE TORN.
THERE'S AN ARGUMENT THAT SAYS CYCLOPS *IS* FIXING THE WORLD.
THE MATH SPEAKS FOR ITSELF AND--
WHAT?
YES, I KNOW, YOU SAY: BUT AT WHAT COST?
BUT, AND HEAR ME OUT, BETWEEN US, THIS ISN'T LIKE GALACTUS OR AN ALIEN INVASION.
THIS ISN'T SOMEONE TRYING TO RUIN US.
THEY *ARE* ALLIES AND THEY *ARE* FIXING THINGS.
THE ONLY ONES GETTING HURT HERE ARE YOU BECAUSE YOU KEEP POKING THEM WITH A STICK.
WILL IT GO THE OTHER WAY? WILL THEY LOSE CONTROL? MAYBE.
BUT ONE MIGHT SAY THAT'S TOMORROW'S PROBLEM.
BECAUSE THEY ARE POSSESSED OF A COSMIC DESTRUCTIVE FORCE THAT THEY *CANNOT CONTROL!*
ARE YOU TELLING ME YOU, REED, YOU OF ALL PEOPLE, DON'T *UNDERSTAND* THIS?
I'M SAYING IT'S ALREADY *HAPPENED.*
I'M STILL RESEARCHING ON MY END. THE NUMBERS: CRIME, FATALITIES, IT'S ALL--
I'M JUST SAYING THERE'S *MORE* THAN ONE WAY TO LOOK AT IT.
AND CONSIDERING YOU TWO BROUGHT THE WORLD TO WAR OVER DIFFERING IDEALS, I'M SURPRISED YOU'RE HAVING A HARD TIME SEEING THAT THERE *MIGHT* BE MORE THAN ONE WAY TO LOOK AT ALL OF THIS.
ASK YOURSELF, HONESTLY...

ARE YOU WORRIED ABOUT THE PHOENIX BECAUSE YOU THINK HE'LL LOSE CONTROL OF IT?
OR ARE YOU WORRIED THAT, WITH THE PHOENIX UNDER CONTROL, THE WORLD IS GOING TO BE A BETTER PLACE WITH NO PLACE FOR YOU IN IT?
AND LISTEN, IF THE PHOENIX *IS* TAMED, IT'S BECAUSE OF *YOU.*
YOU CREATED THE DEVICE THAT BROKE IT APART, RIGHT?
LIKE THE ACCIDENT THAT CREATED PENICILLIN, YOU MIGHT HAVE DONE MORE RIGHT WITH AN ACCIDENT THAN MOST PEOPLE WILL EVER DO ON PURPOSE.
IF THINGS SETTLE, AND THIS IS THE WORLD NOW, TAKE *PRIDE* IN THAT.
AND IF IT DOESN'T?
WELL, THEN YOU HAVE A POINT.
SO YOU'RE READY FOR THE WORLD TO CHANGE THIS MUCH, THIS FAST, THIS UNNATURALLY...
YOU HONESTLY THINK THIS IS OKAY?

I'M NOT SURE WHAT *IS* NATURAL ANYMORE.
I DON'T THINK I *EVER* KNEW.
BUT YES, ME, I'M READY FOR HUMANITY TO TAKE THE NEXT STEP.
I'VE BEEN READY FOR A WHILE.
CAPTAIN, DOCTORS...
DID YOU CATCH THE PART WHERE HE SAID THIS IS ALL MY FAULT?
YEP.
I THINK HE DYES HIS SIDEBURNS TO MAKE HIMSELF LOOK SMARTER.
JUST SAYIN'.
NAMOR'S NOT COMING.
AND I HAVE WORK TO DO.
CAPTAIN, I'LL AWAIT YOUR ORDER.

LET'S GO.
NO.
I'M GOING TO GO.
I'LL WAIT.
STEVE...
...HE'S NOT COMING.
TONY, THIS THING WITH SCOTT SUMMERS...
RICHARDS WAS TALKING ABOUT NUMBERS. I HAVE NUMBERS IN MY HEAD TOO.
WE CAN'T WIN.
NO MATTER WHAT ANGLE YOU LOOK AT THE FIGHT FROM: THE X-MEN ARE GOING TO *TAKE US DOWN.*
ONE WAY OR ANOTHER. THEY WIN, WE LOSE.
THIS, HERE, NOW, NAMOR IS OUR ONLY CHANCE.
MAYBE.
DEFINITELY.
COME ON...

I FEEL BAD ABOUT XAVIER.
HE GOT SOME STUFF OFF HIS CHEST.
YEAH, BUT STILL...
BE NICER TO PEOPLE. DON'T BE SO AGGRESSIVE. WE'VE TALKED ABOUT THIS.
I ONLY DO THAT WHEN I'M TIRED, HUNGRY OR FRUSTRATED.
OR ANY COMBINATION OF THE THREE.
I KNOW.
SEE YOU AT THE CLUBHOUSE, CAPTAIN.

I KNEW YOU'D COME.
I'M HAPPY TO SEE THIS WAS NOT A TRAP.
I WOULD NEVER DO THAT TO YOU.
YOU'RE HERE TO TALK SENSE TO ME.
THAT MAY BE WORSE.
YOU'RE AN AVENGER.
I NEED YOUR HELP.
HELP?
ALLEGIANCE.
BEFORE I WAS AN AVENGER...I WAS A MUTANT AND A KING.
YOU NEED TO STOP THIS.
THIS IS GOING TO END BADLY.
I KNOW YOU THINK SO.
TELL ME YOU HAVE MORE.
I'M ASKING, AS MY BROTHER IN ARMS, AS MY FELLOW SOLDIER...
AS AN INVADER AND AS AN AVENGER...
STOP.

CAPTAIN.
THINGS ARE CHANGING.
FOR THE BETTER.
THIS IS THE WAY OF THE FUTURE.
YOU RESIST CHANGE AND IT MAKES ME WONDER WHAT YOU'VE BEEN FIGHTING FOR ALL THESE YEARS IF NOT THIS.
I'VE BEEN FIGHTING AGAINST PEOPLE WHO PUT THEMSELVES BEFORE OTHERS.
WHO THINK THEMSELVES THE SUPERIOR RACE.
AND IT LOOKS LIKE I'M STILL DOING IT.
YOU **SHOULD** HAVE HAD A TRAP READY.
I SAID I WOULD NEVER DO THAT TO YOU.
WE'RE BROTHERS.

I KNOW.
THAT'S WHY I CAME ALONE.
THAT'S WHY I HAVE NOT BETRAYED THE TRUST OF THIS GROUP.
THAT'S WHY I HAVEN'T DESTROYED YOU WITH A BLINK OF AN EYE.
THAT'S WHY I'M NOT TAKING YOU AS A PRISONER.
THAT'S WHY YOU LIVE.
WHO KNEW WE WOULD ONE DAY BE FOND OF THOSE HORRIBLE DAYS OF WAR...

NEXT ISSUE: GROUND LEVEL

A vs X
NEXT:
IN THE TRENCHES!

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MARVEL

30

A VS X

THE NEW AVENGERS

BENDIS
DEODATO
BEREDO

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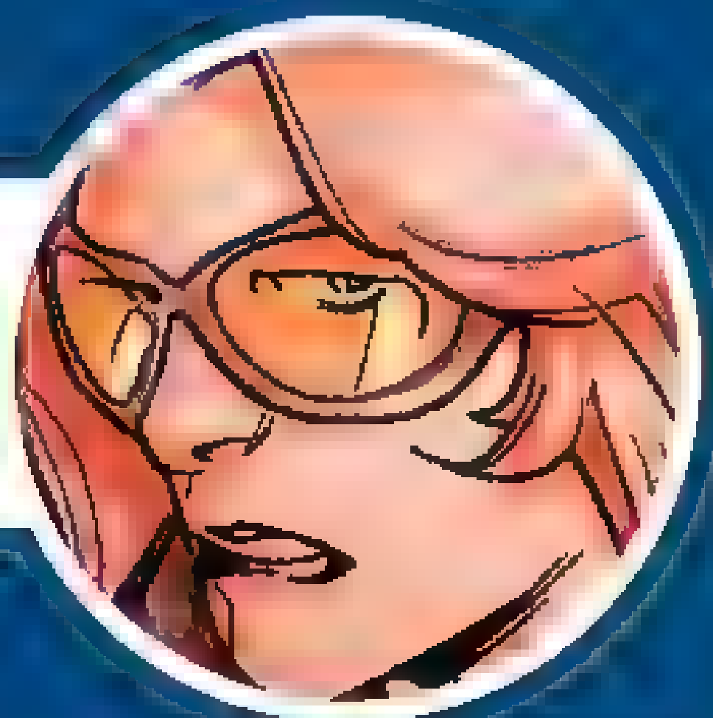
NEW AVENGERS

EARTH'S MIGHTIEST HEROES, UNITED AGAINST A COMMON THREAT! ON THAT DAY THE AVENGERS WERE BORN, TO FIGHT FOES THAT NO SINGLE HERO COULD WITHSTAND!

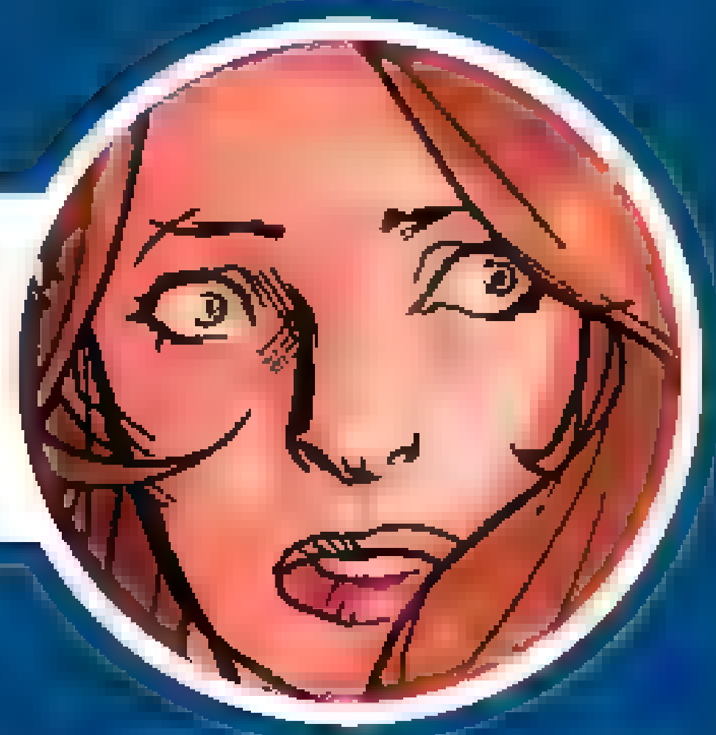
LUKE CAGE

DAREDEVIL

THE THING

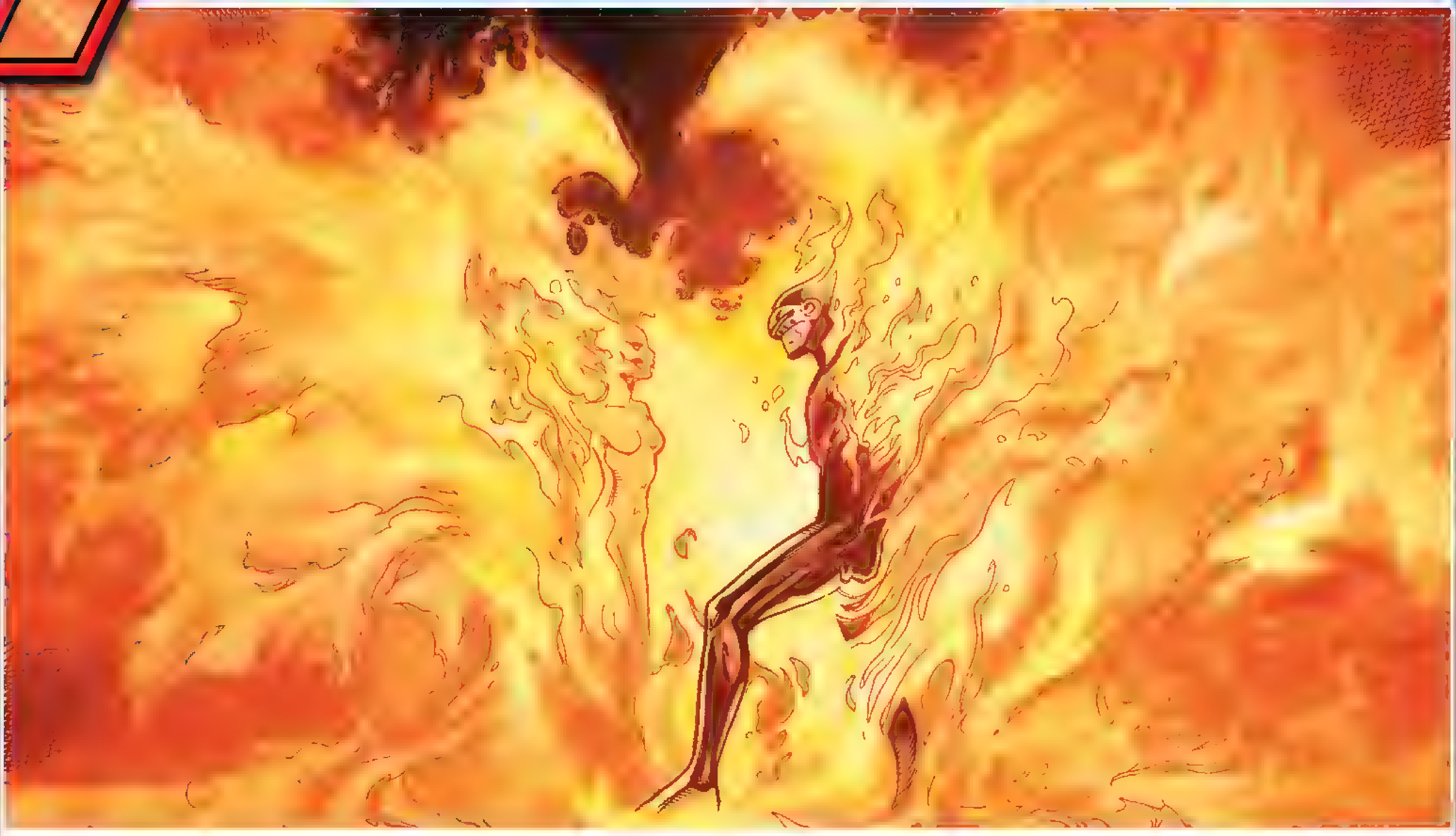


MOCKINGBIRD



JESSICA JONES

IRON FIST



WARNING! READ THIS ISSUE AFTER AVX #11!

THE PHOENIX FORCE ARRIVED ON EARTH, AND ITS POWERS ENDED UP IN FIVE OF THE MOST ICONIC AND POWERFUL MUTANT X-MEN: CYCLOPS, EMMA FROST, NAMOR, COLOSSUS, AND MAGIK. THE PHOENIX FIVE ATTEMPTED TO REMAKE THE WORLD IN THEIR IMAGE, BUT THE AVENGERS, FEARING THE DESTRUCTIVE NATURE OF THE PHOENIX, FOUGHT TO KEEP THEM UNDER CONTROL. EVENTUALLY, MOST OF THE PHOENIX FIVE WERE DEFEATED; THEIR PORTION OF THE PHOENIX POWER BEING DIVIDED AMONG THE REMAINING MEMBERS. WHEN ONLY CYCLOPS AND EMMA REMAINED, CYCLOPS STRUCK DOWN EMMA TO GAIN THE FULL POWER OF THE PHOENIX FORCE.

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SAN FRANCISCO.
WE'RE MOVING.
YEAH, I CAUGHT THAT.
SORRY I SAY OBVIOUS THINGS WHEN I'M EXHAUSTED.
SO, DAREDEVIL, I NEVER GOT TO ASK...
...HOW DO YOU LIKE BEING AN AVENGER?
IS IT ALWAYS *THIS* CRAZY?
YOU CAN HANDLE CRAZY.
THIS IS CRAZY ON *ANOTHER* LEVEL ALTOGETHER.
WELL, YEAH...
COSMIC FORCES, OUT-OF-CONTROL MUTANT TERRORISTS...
HEY, I'M RIGHT HERE.
JUST SETTLE DOWN BACK THERE.
I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU'RE TRYING TO RAISE A CHILD IN ALL THIS...

RRG!
IS THE BABY OKAY?
YES.
IS JESSICA OKAY?
YEAH, YEAH...
WHAT HAPPENED?
I GOTTA MAKE A DECISION IS WHAT HAPPENED.
THIS LIFE IS NO PLACE FOR A BABY.
THERE ARE BABIES BORN IN EVERY HELLHOLE ALL OVER THE PLANET EARTH.
YES.
BUT THEY DON'T *HAVE* A CHOICE.
YOU'RE QUITTING THE AVENGERS?
SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE, MAN.
I NEVER HAD SOMETHING TO LOSE BEFORE.
I *THOUGHT* I DID BUT I WAS KIDDING MYSELF.
BUT ONCE YOU GOT A BABY...
CLICHÉ AS IT IS... EVERYTHING CHANGES.
I KEEP PRETENDING LIKE IT AIN'T, BUT IT--
DEAR LORD, PLEASE MAKE IT STOP.
LADY, I TOLD YOU TO *PIPE DOWN!*

YOU CAN CALL ME EMMA.
NOW I CAN CALL YOU EMMA.
YESTERDAY YOU WANTED ME TO BOW DOWN AND CALL YOU GOD.
I NEVER USED THOSE EXACT WORDS.
FOR THE LIFE OF ME, FROST, I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU THOUGHT WAS GONNA HAPPEN AT THE END OF THIS.
WE WERE *TRYING* TO FIX THE WORLD.
WE WERE *TRYING* TO USE WHAT POWERS WE HAD TO CREATE THE BEST VERSION OF THE WORLD.
END OF THE DAY, ISN'T THAT WHAT *YOU'RE* TRYING TO DO?
YOU TWO OF ALL PEOPLE...
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
I THINK SHE MEANS BECAUSE YOU AND I HAVE DEDICATED SO MUCH OF OUR LIVES TO FIGHTING FOR OUR NEIGHBORHOODS...AND BECAUSE WE'RE BOTH BLACK.
I GUESS IF MY MENTAL POWERS WEREN'T LOCKED DOWN BECAUSE OF THIS CONTRAPTION YOU GOT ME IN... I WOULD HAVE *GOTTEN* THAT JOKE.
MAYBE.
YOU SHOULD CALL YOUR WIFE AND TELL HER YOU'RE OKAY.
YOU'RE RIGHT.
I REALLY NEED TO REMEMBER TO DO STUFF LIKE--
WAIT, WE'RE--

HOMO SAPIENS IS THE ONLY TRUE WORK OF GOD.
SHABUOOM
MUTANT IS THE ABOMINATION OF THE DEVIL.
SHABUOOM
SHABUOOM
"YE SERPENTS, YE GENERATION OF VIPERS, HOW CAN YE ESCAPE THE DAMNATION OF HELL?"
SHABUOOM
SHABUOOM
SHABUOOM
SHABUOOM
MUTANTS MUST DIE SO THAT WE MAY LIVE.
SHABUOOM
SHABUOOM

CAN WE HAVE JUST ONE NORMAL DAY?!
WE'RE SURROUNDED. THEY HAVE TECH.
SOUNDS LIKE MUTANT-HATING PURIFIERS.
THEY HATE MUTANTS LIKE ME ON A RELIGIOUS LEVEL.
TAKE THIS POWER DAMPENER OFF OF ME AND YOU'LL HAVE A FIGHTING CHANCE.
READY?
READY.
YOU'RE THE BULLETPROOF ONE...YOU GO FIRST.
EVERYBODY MAKES ME GO FIRST.
GUYS, I'M TELLING YOU, YOU'RE GOING TO NEED--
GO!
GOD DID NOT CREATE MUTANTS!
"IN THE BEGINNING, GOD CREATED THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH.
"THE EARTH WAS WITHOUT FORM AND VOID, AND DARKNESS WAS OVER THE FACE OF THE DEEP."
WHAT ABOUT: "FOR THE WHOLE LAW IS FULFILLED IN ONE WORD, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF.'"
SHABLOOM
SHABLOOM
SHABLOOM
SHABLOOM
SHABLOOM
SHABLOOM
SHABLOOM
SHABLOOM
"AND NO WONDER, FOR EVEN SATAN DISGUISES HIMSELF AS AN ANGEL OF LIGHT."
SHABLOOM
SHABLOOM
SHABLOOM
SHABLOOM

WHY CAN'T WE HAVE ONE NORMAL DAY?
BENJAMIN, WAKE UP.
WE THERE YET, BOBBI?
WE'RE UNDER ATTACK.
SLEEPIN'... YOUDOIT.
THE TRUCK *BLOWING UP* DIDN'T WAKE YOU UP?
TIRED.
SHABUOOM
"BEHOLD THE DAY OF THE LORD COMETH, CRUEL BOTH WITH WRATH AND FIERCE ANGER!"
HEYsSGOIN ON...
YEAH, WELL, WE AIN'T MUTANTS, GENIUS!
YOU'RE *WORSE!*
"DO YOU NOT KNOW THAT YOU ARE GOD'S TEMPLE AND THAT GOD'S SPIRIT DWELLS IN YOU?"
SHABUOOM
SHABUOOM
SHABUOOM
YOU'RE MUTANT *SYMPATHIZERS!*
RRR!
SHABUOOM
SHABUOOM
SHABUOOM
MUTANT PROTECTORS!
TRAITORS TO THE HUMAN SPECIES!
BETRAYERS OF THE HUMAN RACE AND GOD'S WILL!
DID HE JUST CALL ME AN UNCLE TOM?
IF THAT GETS YOU MAD ENOUGH TO WHOOP THEIR ASS, SURE.
IT DOES.
THEN THEY DID.
"YOU WILL BE DELIVERED UP EVEN BY PARENTS AND BROTHERS AND RELATIVES AND FRIENDS, AND SOME OF YOU THEY WILL PUT TO DEATH."
THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT.
SHABUOOM
SHABUOOM
SHABUOOM

AAIIE!
HATE KOOKS TRYIN' TO BLOW UP MY PALS?
GUESS IT'S CLOBBERIN' TIME!
WHAM
CRASHH
NOW LET'S SEE JUST HOW MANY HITS IT TAKES TA GET TO THE CENTER OF A WHACKED-OUT ZEALOT...
GOD BE WITH ME!
"YOUR KINGDOM COME, YOUR WILL BE DONE, ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN!"
DARGH!

WISH I COULD TELL YOU MY HEART WAS *IN* THIS FIGHT.
I'M ABOUT AS MAD AT FROST AS THESE GUYS ARE.
EXCEPT I SEEM TO BE ABLE TO DO IT WITHOUT COMING OFF LIKE A NUTBALL.
WELL, THAT'S WHAT MAKES US BETTER THAN THEM!
WE CAN JUST NOT LIKE HER FOR HER.
CRASHH
HA!
RR!
ABOMINATION.

THOCK
TANG
AGH!
THOCK
FALUMP
SORRY, MISS FROST...
...YOU'RE STILL UNDER ARREST.
"GOD CREATED MAN IN HIS OWN IMAGE, IN THE IMAGE OF GOD HE CREATED HIM; MALE AND FEMALE HE CREATED THEM!"
GOD FORGIVES YOU YOUR SINS, CREATURE!
CREATURE?

NOW YOU'RE JUST TRYIN' TO HURT MY FEELINGS!
WHAM
AIE!
YEAGH!
SHABUOOM
SHABUOOM
THIS IS MOCKINGBIRD.
S.H.I.E.L.D. COMMAND! SOMEONE TELL CAPTAIN AMERICA WE ARE UNDER ATTACK BY JOYLESS ANTI-MUTANT ZEALOTS.
OKAY, GUYS, I'M GONNA GIVE YOU TO THE COUNT OF THREE.
CUT THIS @#$@#$ OUT OR I'M GONNA--
SHABUOOM
"FOR OUR SAKE HE MADE HIM TO BE SIN WHO KNEW NO SIN, SO THAT IN HIM WE MIGHT BECOME THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD!"
SHABUOOM

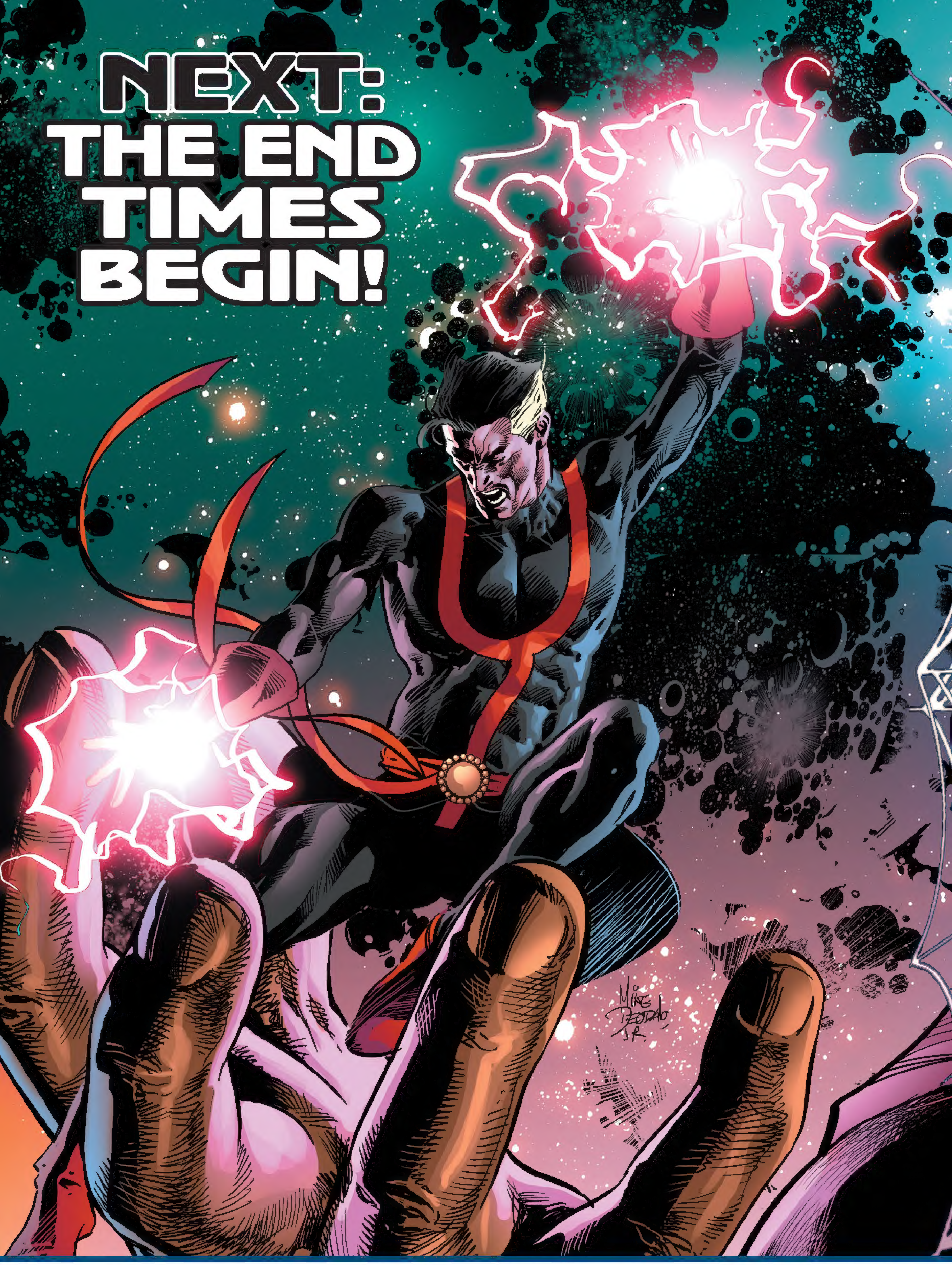
KRABOOM
AGH!
OKAY, NOW YOU'RE REALLY--
SHABUOOM
SHABUOOM
SHABUOOM
"BEHOLD, ALL SOULS ARE MINE--"

ENOUGH!
WHOOMP
AGH!
COFF!
DAMN!
SHABU
"BEHOLD, ALL SOULS ARE MINE; THE SOUL OF THE FATHER AS WELL AS THE SOUL OF THE SON IS MINE: THE SOUL WHO SINS SHALL DIE."
SHABUOOM
SHABUOOM
WILL YOU SHUT UP?!
SHPLUMP
FIRST OF ALL, THAT'S NOT EVEN THE ENTIRE QUOTE!
SHABUOOM
SHABU

SHABUOOM
EVERYBODY DOWN!
SHABUOOM
SHABUOOM
SHABUOOM
SHABUOOM
SHABUOOM
SHABUOOM
SHABUOOM
WELL...

"FOR THE WAGES OF SIN IS DEATH, BUT THE FREE GIFT OF GOD...
"...IS ETERNAL LIFE."
"I DON'T GIVE A #@$@."--TUPAC SHAKUR.
YEEEEOOOO-EEEOOOOWWWW
COPS.
RIGHT ON TIME AS USUAL.
AVENGERS BACKUP AT 4 O'CLOCK.
WOW, CAN'T WE JUST HAVE ONE NORMAL DAY?
I KNOW, RIGHT?
THIS IS A *FINE* DAY.
THE FOES HAVE BEEN VANQUISHED AND OUR PRISONER IS STILL A PRISONER.
I DON'T REMEMBER THE PURIFIERS HAVING THIS LEVEL OF TECH.
YEAH, WELL, GUESS WHAT?
WHEN SOMEONE BELIEVES GOD TOLD THEM TO KILL A SPECIES... MONEY IS NO OBJECT.

LUKE CAGE...OH MAN.
THERE'S NO WAY YOU'D REMEMBER BUT YOU SAVED MY LIFE TWO YEARS AGO.
YEAH, NO KIDDING.
I WAS A VOLUNTEER IN HARLEM AND--
HEY, YOU HAVE A PHONE ON YOU?
UH... SURE.
CAN I BORROW IT?
HEY, BABE, IT'S ME.
I'M OKAY.
NO, REALLY, M'OKAY.
I JUST CALLED TO TELL YOU THAT I'M COMING HOME.
AND-- FOR GOOD.
YEAH.
WHATEVER IT TAKES, BABY.
WHATEVER IT TAKES.
WHAT'S GOING ON OVER THERE?
HE JUST QUIT THE AVENGERS.
NEXT ISSUE: END TIMES


NEXT: THE END TIMES BEGIN!
Mike Deodato Jr.

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MARVEL UNIVERSE VS THE AVENGERS
SOME WORLDS CAN'T BE SAVED.
ALL WORLDS CAN BE AVENGED.
JONATHAN MABERRY - LEANDRO FERNANDEZ
OCTOBER 2012
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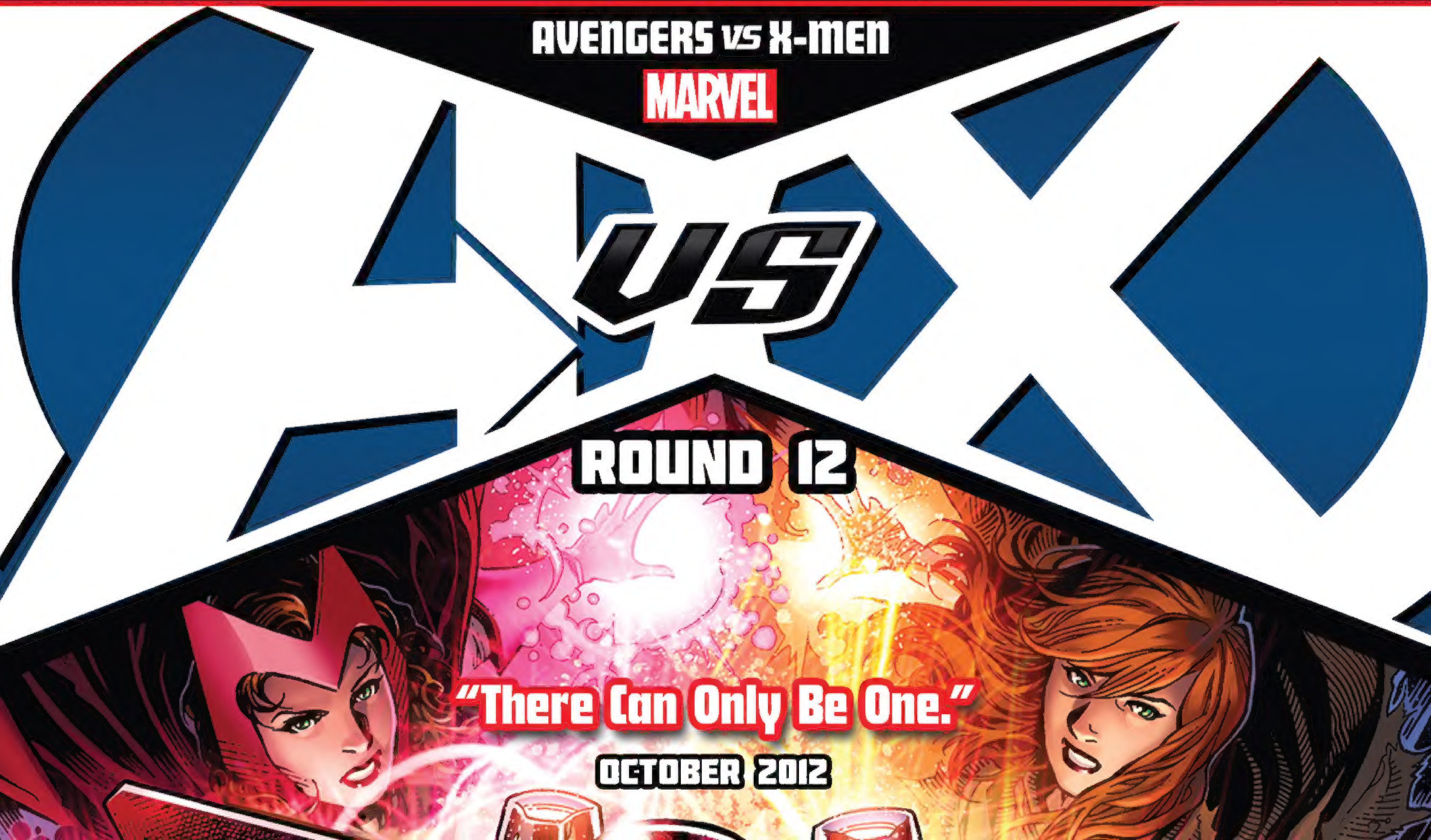
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OCTOBER 2012

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